



# Schopenhauer's Conception of Salvation

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## PREFACE

Schopenhauer has a special niche in the minds of Indian philosophers. His intuitive sympathy with many aspects of Indian philosophy enthused the European scholars to delve into the philosophical tradition of India. The problems of suffering and salvation bring Schopenhauer face to face with the central themes found in the wide gamut of Indian philosophy. The material of this book was submitted for the Ph.D. degree of Osmania University. I have made some changes and added a new chapter.

B. V. Kishan





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## Schopenhauer's Conception of Salvation



## CHAPTER I

# SCHOPENHAUER'S PHILOSOPHY: ITS PRESUPPOSITIONS

"But there is a kind of denial and destruction that is the effect of that strong aspiration after holiness and deliverance, which Schopenhauer was the first philosopher to teach our profane and worldly generation. Everything that can be denied, deserves to be denied; and real sincerity means the belief in a state of things which cannot be denied or in which there is no lie."<sup>1</sup>

—Nietzsche

The primary concern of Schopenhauer was to deal with the predicaments of human existence. He regarded philosophy as a way of life and he opposed all those theories which do not take cognisance of the deeper anxieties and contradictions faced by man. The presuppositions accepted by him truly determine the tendencies of his philosophy.

Man's search for reality grows from the inmost depths of his soul. The quest of the absolute seems to be never ending. It has never subsided in any age, and it continues with unabated zeal and vigour from age to age. This urge seems to be the basic urge of the human soul. It has diverged into many shapes and channels. Each way has its own set of protagonists. They have for their

background either a philosophy or religion or a bare set of ethical principles with no particular metaphysic at its base.

A materialist denies the reality of the spirit, for the very reason that he upholds the reality of matter. Matter is the real for him. It is also the embodiment of truth. All other objects and things are derivations of matter. Matter is that absolute principle which lies behind and is responsible for all phenomena of the world. By analysing matter and finding out new properties, he seemingly continues his search of truth. A materialist proclaims to have known the matter, but he has yet to show that what is left after final analysis of the matter, is matter at all. A man who believes in the supremacy of the spirit and the spiritual reality thinks that it can be known and experienced by different methods. Spirit could not be seen; but it is the only reality behind the physical and material objects of the world. Man, animal kingdom and vegetation are derivations from such a source. Our main object is to seek the reality among the reals.

The search for the absolute reality has so much pervaded the life and acts of man that his entire knowledge seems to be the result of this mission. Philosophy, science and arts have unabatedly continued this search down the ages. Their methods differ, their ways of approach are widely set apart; but their object remains the same, i.e., the search of the absolutely real. Their conclusions may vary and give birth to a mighty structure or some system, philosophically justifiable and religiously sublime. It may be offered that one is the absolutely real, or that reality is in fact fundamentally dual, taking matter and spirit to be separate entities; or that reality is unknowable and that philosophical and metaphysical discussions are of no avail and lead us nowhere, each view with a set of arguments and proofs to justify its own stand, on logical, psychological and moral grounds. In such a case, each system represents a great force in the history of philosophy and in religion, with a code of behaviour and metaphysical arguments. For

many, God is taken as the absolute reality, as the mover of the whole cosmos, the principle of all principles. And we find that in a system of philosophy as Schopenhauer's, absolute reality becomes a blind force, which is irrational, without knowledge. Whatever may be the nature of the system, the basic fact of man's unabating search for the knowledge of the absolute reality, could not be disputed on any ground.

Our age is characterised by two important trends. One is the presumption that the religious and moral values are not in keeping with the spirit of the times. The other is the belief in the demonstrative value of the scientific investigations and its methods. Man has become no more a divine being, but a biological creature, endowed with higher faculties of reasoning and intellect. If there is anything in man which differentiates him from the animal, it is something wholly other. The purpose of man is taken no more to be the realisation of his divine nature, but only the satisfaction of the basic desires and instincts. When the ideal has become the satisfaction of physical wants and amassing physical comforts, there seems hardly any place for the pursuit of those values which have been given to mankind by prophets and seers. When man is viewed as a material object, a clump of clay, what necessity there remains of any other laws, except physical laws, to explain his behaviour. When the division between man and matter vanishes away under the influence of the physical sciences and with the development of scientific technique what else can be expected than the growth of brute force with pernicious influence on the consciousness of moral values. The messages of God-intoxicated men have come to be regarded as unrealistic and devoid of utility and the daily pronouncements of the practical men of affairs are taken as real. With the exclusion of saints, seers and philosophers, scientists have only become the symbols of truth. The situation could not have been so deplorable, as we find it today, even if true scientific spirit should have led the way. But when scientific truths are used to propagate things which are in conflict with the existence,



progress and dignity of man, a deplorable situation develops. The responsibility for this unfortunate state of affairs lies in the blind following of scientific truths, to the total neglect of spiritual values.

Even a materialist could not deny the identity of events and yearnings of the humanity all over the world. The universality of the spiritual yearnings points to the existence of a universal law. Laws of nature apply to all. Mental functions and consequently the ideas of goodness and evil are basically similar in content. Giving margin to the environmental and natural factors, it could be said that universal reality could be reached through different paths. Differences of faith and creed have little to do, in our search for the real. Neither the working of the human mind could be confined ethnically. The colours and symbols of expression may differ, but its goal will remain the same. If the phenomenon of nature is to be considered as a unity, then, why should not the workings of human mind be regarded as an integral whole? If we find a continuation in nature, then, why should we not seek out the same continuity and coherence in the history of mankind? Time and space have not barred the repeated emphasis on the ideas of truth, beauty and divinity, the ideas which are inherent in the nature of man. Buddha, Christ, Plato and Mohammad have all pointed a way towards the spiritual in man. The universality of the religious tenets of the world show that they have much in common. Religious beliefs and tenets are the expressions of the universal reality. Time and space have little to do with the inner religious urge of man.

Philosophy can be material or spiritual. Particularly in the East, it is spiritual. India, the home of several well-developed philosophical systems illustrates well how philosophy can become a guide both in life and action. "Philosophy has for its function the ordering of life and the guidance of action."<sup>2</sup> For this reason only that philosophical systems in India, are termed as 'darsanas.' It means both conceptual knowledge and perceptual observation.<sup>3</sup> In India each philosophical system has its

own followers, who live the very contents of the thoughts expounded by them. Thought which is gained after much labour and intense pain could not be left by itself only as a creation of human imagination. Hair-splitting discussions and logical subtleties, serve no purpose if they fail to satisfy the inner discordance of man. Philosophy must give answer to the riddle of life and death, and the presence of pain and suffering in the life of man. This has been the criterion of philosophy in its claim for genuineness in India. That is why each system of philosophy in India has its own set of ideas on the problem of life and suffering. And they take into cognisance the need of providing a way which will lead the individual from the agony of pain and suffering to salvation or 'moksa.' The experience of countless men stands testimony to what we try to explain in inadequate concepts.

Schopenhauer was greatly influenced by Upanishads.<sup>4</sup> The Upanishads are like a great ocean. Their mystical aphorisms and illustrations have been inexhaustible sources of new systems of thought. The general pattern of Schopenhauer's system is similar to the Indian systems of philosophy. The problem of suffering, the tragic fate of man, and finally the scheme of salvation all are exactly on the lines of any Indian system of thought (darsana). Schopenhauer follows in the steps of the seers of India and dislikes the intellectual philosophy of life.<sup>5</sup> The materialist view that brain is capable of obtaining the real insight into the mystery of life never found favour with him. He has said that a clear insight into life is more important than accumulation of logical and abstract thought. This will undoubtedly lead to the view that he has little belief in reason.

Schopenhauer's thought is traced back to the writings of Plato and Kant. The Absolutely Real for both Plato and Kant lies behind the phenomena. For Plato it is "idea," and for Kant it is the "thing-in-itself." Schopenhauer's system of thought is eclectic in its nature and contents. He draws upon many sources for the sub-

ject matter, taking inspiration from poets and philosophers, religious teachers, and mystics—ancient and modern. He introduces many perspectives taken from religious scriptures and other texts and in his inimitable style, quotes them for the purpose of giving force to his argument. But his original idea of reality as the "Will," which is blind force, remains constant in the conflict of the divergent views that he elaborates. With his knowledge of modern science and biology, he makes old truths look fascinating in the general scheme of his philosophy of pessimism and salvation.

The thing-in-itself of Kant was unknown and unknowable. But Schopenhauer seems to have discovered it; for he qualifies it as blind, causeless, greedy, irrational and ruthless. It is a blind and strong craving for life. In its onward rush, it goes on taking new forms and new shapes. There is a process of the objectification of the will, "this objectification occurred in such a way that its original unity became a multiplicity, a process which received the appropriate name of the principium individuationis (the principle of individuality)."<sup>6</sup> The will which is blind creates life. Though it has no express desire of manifesting itself in any form or object, this process of objectification is without any rational basis. And for the created objects, the world is only an idea. What else remains when objects of the world have no real existence, save as objectifications of the blind will. Herein lies the deep roots of Schopenhauer's pessimistic thought. "The will which considered purely in itself, is without knowledge, and is merely a blind incessant impulse, as we see it appear in unorganised and vegetable nature and their laws, and also in the vegetative part of our own life, receives through the addition of the world as idea, which is developed in subjection to it, the knowledge of its own willing and of what it is that it wills. And this is nothing else than the work as idea, life, precisely as it exists. Therefore, we call the phenomenal world the mirror of the will, its objectivity. And since what the will wills is always life, just be-

cause life is nothing but the representation of that willing for the idea, it is all one and a mere pleonasm if, instead of simply saying "the will," we say "the will to live."<sup>7</sup>

The notion of the free will of man, and his independent existence, received a setback in Schopenhauer's philosophy. Man is like the will. The qualities of will are the natural qualities of man. The material man of Schopenhauer is no less a brute than the will itself. As a grade of the objectification of the will, man is in no way different from the objects which stand on a lower grade of objectification of will. The 18th century incomplete scientific and physiological knowledge of which Schopenhauer was well acquainted seems to make him draw such a result. His thought has its roots in the spiritual soil. Schopenhauer, with all his scientific facts, could not completely justify his stand, to give an objective explanation of the problem of existence.<sup>8</sup> It becomes clear from the way he deals the problem of existence that it is both idealistic and subjective. This anti-thesis in his system seems due to two reasons.<sup>9</sup> His critical view of knowledge and the inherent, irrational element in the existence of man.

One would be misled to think that it was the intellect first which brought forth the will, when one reads his description of intellect and its capacity for insight and reason, which provides us with real knowledge. Intellect is really brought forth by will, and it serves the will. "Intellect, originally only intended to present to an individual will its paltry aims, comprehends accordingly mere relations of things, and does not penetrate to their inner being, to their real nature. It is therefore a merely superficial force, clings to the surface of things, and apprehends mere species transitivas, not the true being of things."<sup>10</sup>

By making intellect subservient to will, Schopenhauer has upheld the blind will as the absolute power. If the reason and intellect should be regarded as slaves of the blind will, where remains the importance of man?



Schopenhauer's evaluation of reason and intellect is not in keeping with the tradition of the Western philosophy. In the West, reason has been taken to be a potent weapon in the hands of man. Schleiermacher's entire idealistic optimism is based on the power of reason. And Hegel has successfully demonstrated the importance of reason in Nature and History. But Schopenhauer breaks away from the fold of European philosophers. This seems to be due to the influence of Eastern Upanishads, which indeed accept reason and intellect as capable of leading one towards the Absolute but deem it incapable to reveal truth about the absolute reality. Intellect is a qualified weapon in the search for truth and it is not the creation of any blind force. In Upanishads, we find the intellectual and logical methods have been never discarded in gaining philosophical or spiritual knowledge, but they were always called upon to confirm mystical insight and knowledge. But the rank and place given to mental thinking was never of ultimate importance, it always received a subsidiary position. What is of great importance is direct spiritual experience. Thus, after spiritual experience, through intuition and insight, comes the place of intellect and reason. Here, it must be noted that reason and intellect have gone a long way in proving the spiritual experience as real and genuine. And further, it has to be observed that the ultimate purpose of philosophy and religion was to give knowledge which was beyond the apprehension of reason or intellect. The power of mind was held to be incapable of providing real knowledge about the absolute. And as philosophy has never been a mental jugglery or hair-splitting in India, the method of logical analysis and intellectual content came to be regarded as impotent to furnish to the aspiring soul the knowledge which he lacked. If no other reason than this only, reason received a subservient place. Schopenhauer is justified to a great extent when he says that intellect does not possess the absolute power, and that it is not independent, but errs in pleading that it is the creation of something which is irrational and

blind. That intellect which is the great weapon in the hands of man, which wins for him unique place in creation should be regarded by Schopenhauer as a slave of the blind will, is highly deplorable. Even assuming the premises of Schopenhauer about the power of intellect to overcome the will his view of a dependent intellect fails miserably. It may be however freely admitted that man with the help of his intellect and consciousness has the power to negate the will itself. It follows that will is at least in man a force to be conquered by his indomitable spirit.

But Schopenhauer never draws such a conclusion. For him though the will is denied by insight and intellect in man as 'the crown of creation' and final grade of the objectification of the will, the will remains the same old will as it is on lower grade of its objectification. Though admitting a definite evolution in the nature of the will, which is all-pervading and all-comprehensive, he holds that on all levels will remains the same blind will. Hence, one conclusion can be certainly drawn from Schopenhauer's conception of will and its grades of objectification. It is that the will gradually begins to manifest itself in subtle and subtler ways and that in such change from lower to higher grades of its objectification, no change takes place in the original nature of the will. The grades of objectification of the will are no doubt due to unfoldment of the will, in different ways, on different planes. This view cannot be contended. But it is not at all clear how, in the final grade of objectification, the will brings about in man reason and intellect by its own activity. Here, Schopenhauer introduces an element of mystery in his philosophy. When there is nothing beside and beyond an irrational will how does the intellect manage to crop up all on a sudden? And how does in man the will reach a stage in its unfoldment of qualities which are subtle and rational? The dynamic view of reality expressed by Schopenhauer, as will, is in fact the vision of will in its struggle for life and unfoldment. The will perpetually unfolds itself. It has potential greatness. In man it has revealed its qua-

lity of goodness and rationality. Man is the picture of will, in whom the will finds its own nature. But can man be taken as the final objectification of the will? No. Because as a product of will he is not the sovereign and only a part manifestation of the potentiality of the unfolding will, his nature could not be taken as perfect. But by transcending the will itself of which he is a part and shadow, by negating the instinctive and irrational part of his nature (the character of will on its lower grade of objectification) with the help of his intellect and abstract reasoning, he can mount up to a region where the 'Satvic' reign of will prevails and which is its final consummation. Thus, the will no more remains a blind irrational and brute force, but dispenser of reason, wisdom, and humane qualities. By adopting the subtle qualities and negating the baser qualities of will, man reaches the highest stage in the scheme of nature. Truly, man is called the 'Crown of Creation.'

This view is not at all without good grounds and is consistent with the original view of objectification of will. What is blind could not think of manifesting itself in subtle forms. And the will as the absolute principle which lies behind all the objects and phenomena of the world, should have in it rational and spiritual elements. And as there is a continuous order of development in nature from the cruder forces and organisms to the developed ones, we can infer that the power which runs the whole show of Cosmos and nature, is not blind but all-perceiving, and that in man it has all the ingredients of its nature, rational and irrational, man being on the highest grade of the objectification of the will. But the fact remains that Schopenhauer never for a moment holds such a view; the inconsistency remains glaring in his system. His conception of the suffering man upon which he builds up the structure of a pessimistic philosophy fails to give any justification to his claim to have discovered a way of salvation for the suffering man.

The basic doctrine of the will as the absolute reality is responsible for making the philosophy of Schopenhauer pessimistic in its nature. This pessimism is a

natural corollary from the conception of will. Schopenhauer could not escape pessimism in his conclusions from his notion of will. All the philosophy and psychology of the will could lead him only to the conclusion that absolute reality is blind, it has no purpose at all, and man comes out of a blind force and vanishes into the realm of blind upsurge of will. Absolute reality or will is the embodiment of dissatisfaction. It is essentially unhappiness. It strives blindly—but to what purpose? The answer is for no purpose at all. Though it is evident from Schopenhauer's writings that it is striving for something—as it becomes evident from the different grades of objectification of the will. The world is full of suffering, craving, demand and dissatisfaction. A world could not be more than this for Schopenhauer. The metaphysical craving of the will works equally in the organic and the inorganic and what more can these realms of being be than will in miniature? The world brought forth by the will is full of injustice and ferocity. The world is not a place for recognition of noble virtues and values—and a place for realisation of majestic truths, but an abode of miserable creatures endowed with capacities of destruction. The idea of principium individuationis represents the will as dividing itself into a multiplicity of parts. Each part is as good or as bad, as the metaphysical will. Here, the will seems to forget its unity—which is its nature. And this multiplicity of will makes it divide against itself, at the cost of its unity. Each part tries to claim its superiority at the cost of the other and never hesitates even to swallow the other in order to prolong itself. The multiplicity of the metaphysical will of Schopenhauer here resembles the Platonic ideas. But ideas of Plato are not akin to the multiplied objects of the metaphysical will. Nor is their mission akin to the phenomenal objects of will, though they are similar in appearance. In the philosophy of Schopenhauer, time, space and other objects of the metaphysical will become conjoined in a strange way, giving the appearance of a world which has no purpose and function. Things belonging to the



lower grade of the objectification of the world are to serve as prey to those which are on a higher grade of the objectification of the will. And man being the highest and subtle objectification of the will is called the 'Crown of Creation.' He is the 'Crown of Creation,' but basically true to the qualities of the will. In the spirit of Schopenhauer's thought, we could say that man has an absolute right to use the world and entire creation for his purpose and profit, and his struggle for existence is ample proof of this fact. And his knowledge and mental equipment help him in furthering this natural mission. But when we consider this view, we find that the purpose underlying the life of man is unholy—it is to subserve other creatures and even his kind to satisfy his own purpose as an individual.

No doubt this evaluation of human situation is intensely pessimistic. The pessimism of Schopenhauer could not be compared with the pessimism we find in Buddhism. Buddha's pessimistic view of life is based on reality and his own experience. Life is suffering and birth is suffering—but it is so until man has realised the reality and truth. The world is a place not worthy to live and move in when the aspirant himself moves not on the path of truth and holiness. The element of suffering and pain in life is not absolute, it is transitory, and could be overcome only when the residuary effects of the law of Karma are done away with. Suffering is at times necessary, to induce man to follow the path. Sufferings of life are not permanent; they are transitory and ephemeral. They do not at all constitute the ingredients of the inner nature of man. The mission of man is to realise truth by following the moral precepts and attain the supreme abode and peace of Nirvana. There is suffering and injustice in the world, but they are active and owe their force to man's own lack of right action and knowledge. The eternal moral order lying behind the passing world and nature is the source of inspiration to man and an incentive for him to move towards reality and peace.

Both Schopenhauer and Buddha start from the fact

of suffering in life. But one has made life a reflection of the metaphysical suffering and the other has seen in life a means to end suffering and attain peace. While for Schopenhauer life affords a chance to deny the will-to-live, life for Buddha means an opportunity to set on a new life, conquering evil, and overcoming suffering by right actions and right thought. For Schopenhauer, the life of man is an isolated episode, there is no continuity between one life and another, and hence he is not responsible for his actions. But the law of Karma is very significant for Buddha. No man can escape the consequences of actions. He is totally responsible for his acts. He has to pay off for all his acts, if not in this life, in the coming lives. The principle and fact of suffering which made Buddha start his quest is embedded in his noble truths. Life with its vicissitudes and pain is ungainly, until they are overcome. But what brings life into the world? Is it the thirst for existence, the will-to-live of Schopenhauer? Here, Buddha suggests that it is the law of Karma. The law of Karma explains that no man can escape the acts done by him. Sufferings are due to Karma. A circle of cause and effect, following each other in the shape of a link, runs through the lives of the individuals. This principle unites the links and presents a complete picture. Buddhaghosa, the great writer of Buddhism, has said that Dhamma is akin to condition.<sup>11</sup> Here, we find that Buddhism gives more attention to the order of things as it is without presupposing any transcendental principle by which the origin of the world could be explained. This order they conceived as a multitudinous and continual coming to be and passing away of each and everything and this constant transition or change or becoming was not capricious or ordained for the occasion or pre-ordained, but proceeded by way of natural causation.<sup>12</sup> No rationalistic doctrine could be deduced from the teachings of Buddha. No doubt he started his enquiry into the truth of things as he came across them, and never accepted any supernatural element in his study of reality. In this matter

Buddha is at one with modern scientists who are of opinion that the idea of supernatural interference should not be introduced into the logical interpretation of natural phenomena.<sup>13</sup> But the scientific attitude of Buddha is not at all unmoral. And his silence on the questions relating to metaphysics is more profound and deep than any metaphysical answer to it. But in the case of Schopenhauer though he works on well-grounded scientific facts for the formation of his system he could not prevent the infiltration of both metaphysical and mystical elements, especially when he constructs a theory of the will, and attempts to assign to man a place worthy of him in the scheme of will and nature.

One thing characterises Schopenhauer among modern philosophers. It is his practical approach to the issues of life. Schopenhauer is never content to give intellectual answers to the ethical and moral needs of man. In the philosophy of Schopenhauer, we find issues raised which were wholly neglected by his predecessors. For example, the role of sexual love in life. Feelings, impulses and instincts receive importance in his philosophy. So also fright, anger, emulation, joy, fear with their influence upon human intellect.<sup>14</sup> Intellect becomes a hopeless victim of delusion, when these demoniac forces are present and active in man. But can the intellect come to sound and lasting conclusions when it is free from the influence of anger and fright? Schopenhauer discusses at great length about them. But the answer he gives is hardly tenable. We may say of course with the evolutionists that the difficulty is largely one of our own making, because as a matter of fact, reason itself is an instinct more complex perhaps than other instincts but still an instinct whose working we may scientifically describe and determine.<sup>15</sup> Schopenhauer deals at length clearly with the basic role of instincts and reason, but he concludes with the faith that only philosophical and sudden insight can impart us true knowledge. Thus, in the end Schopenhauer by attributing to intellect the power of intuition and abstract thinking gives new turn to the

whole problem of reason and instincts, their function, and the place which they possess in the attainment of knowledge.

Schopenhauer may be excused for all his inconsistencies and paradoxical statements. His sincere and heart-felt attempt to suggest an answer for the travails of life could not be doubted. His system may lack logical consistency, when compared with the systems of some of his contemporaries. One may argue convincingly against the philosophical worth of the system itself—but no one can doubt the significance of his system, from the point of view of life. His assertion of the view that philosophy should be an attempt to give solution to the deeply felt problems of human soul is highly remarkable. This shows how near his system of thought is to the philosophical systems of India known as 'darśanas.' It is here suggested that in its way of dealing with the problem of life and existence, and in its attempt to provide the method to attain peace and solace in life its resemblance to the Indian 'darsanas' is striking. It is in fact a new 'darsana.' The philosophy of Schopenhauer is an example of an eastern plant, attaining maturity in an alien atmosphere and environment. And if it contains some elements which are contrary to its original nature, it must be attributed to the environmental factor and condition of the soil in which it was planted and not to the seedling itself.

Schopenhauer's treatment of religion is based on man's need of enlightenment and insight. Man's attempt to gain supremacy over his inner conflicts, and to find his right place in the scheme of nature, leads him to the fold of religion. Schopenhauer's religious philosophy is an attempt in this direction. His approach to the problem of religion is subjective. Religious consciousness has its origin in the fact that our deepest relations to reality are largely sub-conscious; they lie out of our inner consciousness.<sup>16</sup> This has led Schopenhauer to isolate every element of knowledge from the religious consciousness. Schopenhauer's approach to the phenomena of religion is practical indeed. Religion is a force



that works to mitigate the sufferings of human lives, gives solace and comfort to the discursive intellect and brooding soul. With this religious perspective he develops a philosophy of religion which is highly metaphysical and spiritual.

It is the presence of suffering in the nature of man and the world that induces Schopenhauer to draw inspiration from myriad religious texts, from the Bible and Upanishads. His predilection for ascetic methods to get peace is a distant echo of the teachings of Brahmanism. Asceticism has an important place in the struggle of man for the realisation of reality. Schopenhauer sees in asceticism a potent weapon to kill the blind will and its instinctive force. Even if the purpose would be other than this, it cannot be denied that the ascetic kind of life is essential in the battle against the desires that lead to evil.

Asceticism practised in all lands has one characteristic in common. Schopenhauer draws upon this common legacy. The privations of the body, and self-inflicted sufferings are taken as necessary in order to get enlightenment and bliss of God. These are taken as compensating factors. In Christianity also as in other religions, we find, this tendency at work. The Latins were acquainted with the retributive value of suffering from the days of Tertullian and Cyprian. Not only suffering was regarded as a factor of atonement, it was also regarded as a source for accumulation of merits. This view of suffering and privations naturally proved to be an encouraging factor for asceticism. But this idea of reducing and blotting of sin by ascetic means is not based on a balanced view of existence. Sin would become of no import and nobody would be afraid to do unlawful acts, if he has the will and power to pay away the sins by an accumulated amount of suffering, by practising asceticism. Brahmanism has also a similar conception. It also accords a high value to asceticism. It believes in the retributive efforts of suffering as pleasing to God. This is a philosophical position in which morals and ethics which are to guide the actions of man in

society become jeopardised and blind asceticism becomes a means of using accumulated powers as a shield for evil and lust. We see that Buddhism has raised a cry of protest against the abuse of asceticism. Buddhism emphasised the value of human suffering not as a source to gain bliss from Gods, but to eschew suffering in the human life. Human life is an episode of suffering and Buddha tries to resolve this suffering under four truths. These four truths are: suffering, the cause of suffering, the cessation of suffering and the path which leads to the cessation of suffering. Life begins with sorrow and suffering and its growth is also embedded in suffering. The attachments of love and friendship prove to be painful when one has to break away from them. The joy and pleasures of life are also sources of suffering, when they pass off. In short, the very individuality of man is full of suffering. The craving which remains after the momentary satisfaction of the senses adds still more suffering to man. Until the *tanha* or thirst is conquered which leads a man into the abyss of sorrow and suffering, it is difficult to avert them. For Buddha, this suffering can be overcome by following the eight-fold path. And in the case of Schopenhauer, sufferings of life have a dual purpose: first they make us realise the plight of human existence and second sufferings are necessary in the attempt of man to gain inner peace.

But Buddhism spares no pains in emphasising the presence of suffering in life and tries to meet it by an ethical code. Suffering in Buddhism has also a two-fold significance. It makes one realise the value of life only when the suffering which abides in life is fully averted. Suffering is also an indirect proof of the inanity of worldly joys and riches. It makes evident the necessity of overcoming it by following the eight-fold path. Life is not to be shunned because it contains much suffering; but suffering is to be overcome if we really wish to make life worth-living and worth-enjoying. A religion which professed compassion for all could not proclaim the annihilation of life as necessary to escape

from suffering and pains of life. Buddha declares that his law is a law of grace for all. The moral personality of man was emphasised by Stoicism and Platonism also. In the verses of Dhammapada we find many lines which give high place to the personality of man, insisting on "its independence and self-sustainment, on its authority as source of all other values, and of the bliss of its inward life."<sup>17</sup> The moral personality of man has been taken as a source of attaining absolute truth and knowledge. The Dhammapada says: "The fields are damaged by weeds, and man by wishing." As a rock is not shaken by the wind, so the wise falter not in praise or blame. "They are serene like a deep lake." And also that "the just man who speaks truly and does his own work, the world will love." "The light of the law exceeds all other gifts, it sweetens all joys." These were the words of practical wisdom which could give lead to the aspiring man.

The comparison of Schopenhauer's philosophical views to that of Buddhism affords us advantage ground to see the working of the human mind in its search for reality. Schopenhauer has of course no belief in the moral personality of man and in his inherent goodness. Yet his philosophy is an attempt to provide substance to those who are struggling to arrive at certain conclusions about the problem of life and existence.

Schopenhauer's conception of suffering is based on the metaphysical will, which is blind and irrational. The Buddhist idea of suffering is linked with their theory of transmigration, which is as Rhys Davids thinks "a moral cause for the suffering condition of men in this birth."<sup>18</sup> In view of the denial of the existence of the soul, it looks strange how Buddha propounds this mysterious doctrine. Strange indeed is the way in which Buddhism succeeds in accounting for the existence of suffering in the present life. Buddhism lays stress on the acts of a person and their results. Our moral action with its significance has been emphasised in Brihad-aranyaka Upanishad in a way closely resembling the Buddhist doctrine. The importance of moral personality

and character in the estimation of life was realised in the hoary past of India. Conduct and behaviour mould the law of Karma, and play a great part in framing one's character. The emphasis of Buddhism on right conduct and right views is meant to move man by rational methods to do good acts and to lead a life of compassion and love for all. As Buddha has said: "Beings are owners of their works (Karma), heirs of their works: their works and their matrix," these works have their own chain of consequences.<sup>19</sup> In sheer depth of thought, the scanty ethics of Schopenhauer could not stand comparison with the Buddhist principles of morality and ethics, but it provides sufficient grounds for man to behave with his kind with love and what is more important with sympathy.

Schopenhauer's ethics does not provide us sufficient grounds to justify the need of moral action, and to end the sorrows of life. But Buddhism emphasises the need of moral action to bring to an end the sorrows of life. The fact of suffering was overlooked neither by Buddha nor by Schopenhauer. Buddhism is quite clear on this ground. Buddhism makes not needlessly the idea of suffering a gift of God to test one's power and veracity. Buddha has no belief in suffering as the result of divine origination. But Schopenhauer derives the element of suffering which for him is the essential inner element of man from the metaphysical will; suffering has a source for which man is not responsible. It is there as the fact of his very existence. On the other hand, Buddha is clear that suffering is as such the creation of man by his own acts and actions. To allude suffering to a metaphysical source is a blind act, says Buddha. This criticism could be justifiably levelled against Schopenhauer. For Buddha, suffering is the result of natural causes and by removing these causes only suffering could be remedied. Sorrow and the end of sorrow is the message of Buddha. 'Dukham eva dukkhassa nirodhana' is the message of Buddha. The eternal moral now is the absolute judge of our actions. Thirst or trishna is like a sticking mass which makes



a person take birth again and again in the world and until it is conquered, suffering lingers. Suffering may however become an awakenēr and ultimately force a person follow the eight-fold path and obtain salvation.

The undeniable fact of suffering in life has produced many Schools of philosophy, even materialistic, which preached the doctrine of pleasure for the moment for tomorrow we die. Materialist sees life as dependent on matter. Man becomes only an aggregate of atoms. Even consciousness and mind are only products of matter. Suffering and pain have only physiological origin for the materialist. He is not susceptible to a feeling of inner vacuum in man, which is often at work even in the presence of all the comforts of the world. For some materialists, like the Carvaks of India, complete freedom from suffering and pain could be possible only after the disintegration of the body into its constituent elements. And a materialist should always try to get as much pleasure as possible because once life is finished all else would end. They deny any permanent substratum for the existence of life. Thus, this conception of joy is as simple as is their idea of suffering. In other words, it can be said that one should get as much pleasure as possible in order to avoid pain and suffering. The absurdity of this view is clear. Materialism can only provide a scheme of ethics on the basis of unhampere d hedonism. It aims at avoiding the sufferings and pains of life. Bare human sympathy could do no good. It lacks the strength to produce a character that makes man noble and virtuous. A wise man is not one who wants worldly riches. But a materialist who denies the existence of truth and goodness in the nature of man would undoubtedly say so. For those who believe that suffering is due to non-attainment of riches and means of sensual satisfaction, only bodily pleasures are tangible and carry weight. They pay no regard for inner or spiritual suffering. But Buddhism would deny the ethical consequences of materialism outright. Schopenhauer is also against such a view. He is of the view that objects of pleasure are not con-

ducive to a life of peace and tranquillity. He is utterly against joy-hunters and pleasure lovers. He says : "The allurements of hope, the flattery of the present, the sweetness of pleasure, the well being which falls to our lot, amid the lamentations of a suffering world, governed by chance and error, draws us back to it and rivets our bonds anew."<sup>20</sup> Further, Schopenhauer shows how riches and holding of money could only make one stick to life, and dupe him. No thought for the future quails him and his moral sense is benumbed. Money could not give any freedom from suffering. Schopenhauer quotes from the Bible the following words : "It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the Kingdom of God."

How far it is feasible to avoid suffering with the help of money has been well pointed out by Adam Smith. He says that "wealth and greatness are mere trinkets of frivolous utility no more adapted for procuring ease of body or tranquillity of mind than the tweezer-ceaser of the lover of toys ; and like them too, more troublesome to the person who carries them about with him all the advantages than can afford him are commodious... In case of body and peace of mind, all the different ranks of life are merely upon a level, and the beggar who suns himself by the side of the highway possesses the security which the kings are fighting for."<sup>21</sup>

Schopenhauer not only emphasises the fact of suffering which is life but points out the way by which it can be successfully overcome. There is a sure release from the faults and miseries of life. This life which is full of penalties could be made an object of the negation of the will itself. Man stands high on the grade of the objectification of the will. He has the power of consciousness, and his mind has the capacity to think of the abstract. This is a great power which man possesses. Thus, he can attain salvation. Schopenhauer says that the intellect of man saves him from the slavery of the will. He rejects the view that death can at all bring any kind of peace. For Schopenhauer death does belong

to the sphere of the phenomenal and change. Man being the objectification of the will could not be called mortal at all. The individuality of man remains no more after death, but the force of which he is a part remains for ever. A part of will only can merge in the will. The error of which has brought him into being, the original sin of his birth, could not be set right by suicide or death. Schopenhauer has repeatedly denied the utility of suicide and death as a means of escape from the miseries of life. For he explicitly says that the will to live is never defeated by suicide, but on the contrary it gets another triumph.

Though the intellect is a creature of the will, and actually its slave, it does not remain in this state for ever. There are exceptional circumstances when it asserts itself and gets the upper hand. In the man of genius and in the man of art and aesthetic vision, the intellect becomes so strong as to detach itself from the yoke of the will and establish its supremacy and independent rule—the will to live is no more effective. It is then that a great change takes place, the individual or the subject no more remains an object of the will. Now, a will-less subject of pure knowledge appears. This state of detachment ensures for man total freedom from the tyranny of the will. This redemptive doctrine of Schopenhauer is the corner stone of his philosophy. Schopenhauer uses his power of dramatic narrative to describe the practical worth which his view of salvation has. It is vain to deny the fact that he has exaggerated the presence of suffering in life. The will to live is apprehended as composed of evil and pain only. But he is equally emphatic about the blessings of art and the way in which it can provide solace to the lost soul. This intellectual approach of Schopenhauer is the result of his own personal experience.

Schopenhauer calls the state of aesthetic experience as similar in content to what Spinoza means by his famous words: "*Meus acterma est, quatenus res sub aeternitatis specie concipit*" (Eth. V. Pr. 31. School), for in such contemplation the particular thing at once be-

comes the idea of its species, and the perceiving individual becomes pure subject of knowledge. Schopenhauer also compares his view to that of Epicurus. He says: "It is the painless state praised by Epicurus as the highest good and the state of the Gods; we are for a moment released from the base urge of the will, we celebrate the sabbath of our trial in the prison house of will, the wheel of Isciron stands still."

## CHAPTER II

# ETHICS

"They that sow in tears shall reap in joy"

—The Psalms, 126.5

"If morality should rank with philosophy and art it cannot be allowed to occupy the same place with love and sympathy but should elevate itself to the negation of will. 'The value of life' consist just in the fact that 'it teaches us not to will it'."¹

—Johannes Volkelt

Schopenhauer accepted the relevance of ethical values in the life of man. He recognises the contributions made by different traditions in the field of ethics. He adopts into his philosophy such ethical values which possessed universal appeal. He overcomes pessimism and the negative approach towards life and world by positing a harmonious theory of ethics.

The great intellectual activity of the 17th and 18th centuries produced notable contributions in the fields of scientific literature and philosophy. There was a struggle between ideals of liberty and despotism, between authority and reason. This period is further marked by remarkable increase in scientific knowledge. Descartes (1596-1650) had founded the critical philosophy.



His philosophy is dualistic and establishes the distinction between mind and matter. Descartes himself, though an ardent Roman Catholic, was inclined to make difference between what is supernatural and natural. Another French writer, Gassendi (1592-1655), further advances the ideas of Descartes and points out that matter is atomic, uncreated, and could not be destroyed. There are philosophers who have tried to reconcile Christianity with the advancement of science. Among them who deserve our attention is Leibnitz (1646-1716). In his philosophy we can see the revival of the old Greek idea of atoms. But his atoms are called monads, i.e., spiritual atoms. Thus, Leibnitz successfully tries to spiritualise the matter. Bishop Berkeley (1684-1753) maintains in his idealistic system that no reality can ever claim to lie without the mind of man, and outside the bigger and all pervading mind of God. But David Hume (1711-76) does not accept the Berkeleyan stand-point and believes in the supremacy of human experience. And the critical philosophy of Immanuel Kant (1724-1804) seeks a new solution of the moral problem. The reasoning capacity of man and his intellect cannot form any idea of the transcendent. The moral sense which is in man, nevertheless impels him to admit the transcendental existence of God and immortality of the soul. The philosophers who followed Kant and those who preceded him were also scientists and well-acquainted with the knowledge of physics, chemistry and biology of their time. As, for example, Goethe though a poet above all had done research in colour perception and Schopenhauer often quotes him in his works. This fact shows how closely the realms of science and philosophy were related to each other at that time. Schopenhauer claims that his metaphysical doctrine of will has to its credit the corroboration of scientific discoveries. But what is important in Schopenhauer's philosophy is not so much its intellectual and scientific foundation but the ethical fervour which leads man "to the gate of heaven."<sup>2</sup>

Schopenhauer is more deeply concerned with the

life and actions of man than metaphysical discussions which lead nowhere.

### Human Life and Suffering

Suffering permeates life. It alone is the positive and immediate datum of our being.<sup>3</sup> Suffering and pain manifest themselves in the needs and necessities of our lives. Pain, according to Schopenhauer, always outweighs pleasures in life.<sup>4</sup> Leibnitz held that pain or evil is a negative quality. Though Schopenhauer has no aversion to pleasure, he does not cherish pain either. Man with his "higher possibilities of his nervous system"<sup>5</sup> has become more susceptible to pain and pleasure. He thinks of the future and past, and his developed memory and keen intellect contribute in bringing about the sorry state of affairs in which he finds himself. This is the fundamental truth of human existence. But with brutes and animals which are confined to the present only, the fears of the future and consequences of the past are of no significance. But with man, Schopenhauer says, the situation is quite different. The modes in which man suffers are almost infinite. But at the same time man draws pleasure from manifold sources and consequently pain also is seen lurking for him in any place. The reflective power of man has also much to be blamed for the enhancement of suffering in life.<sup>6</sup> Ambition, feelings of honour and shame and the opinions of others about him are the incentives of human life and goad him to action. And then the greatest pain which a man feels is death as "something real to him."<sup>7</sup> Schopenhauer refers to the ancient myth in this context and avers that the world is a product of a divine mistake and until final atonement is made by Brahma, it would remain in the bonds of suffering.<sup>8</sup> He thus draws upon a popular belief in the Indian mythology. It is the sin of the world which has produced suffering in the world.<sup>9</sup> Our world is not the best of all possible worlds, while there is still much possibility of betterment. The story of the fall "is the only metaphysical

truth," which Schopenhauer finds in the Holy Testament. The only true explanation of the existence of the world is that "it is the result of some false step, some sin, of which we are paying penalty."<sup>10</sup> Schopenhauer figures suffering and pain in all activities of life and existence. All that is born of a false step and an original sin. Schopenhauer quotes the Buddhists as saying that, our world is due to the result of "an inexplicable disturbance in the heavenly calm of Nirvana."

Until the sin of existence, which is suffering, is atoned by man, deliverance from the painful existence of life is impossible, and the idea of a blissful and virtuous life becomes devoid of meaning.

### Significance of Ethics

The significance of ethics for Schopenhauer is fundamental. When the object of ethics is to help and lead man to a happy life,<sup>11</sup> Schopenhauer stipulates that ethics must, in the words of the Sankhyakarika, "redeem a person from the misery of existence."<sup>12</sup>

Schopenhauer draws freely from the teachings of the New & Old Testament. He calls his teaching "the only true Christian philosophy."<sup>13</sup> The spirit of the Old Testament represents man confined to the dominion of law from which there is no redemption. And the New Testament with its spirit of asceticism and the denial of the will to live stands for a transition from Law to Faith, "from justification by works to redemption through Mediator, from the domain of sin and death to eternal life in Christ, means, when taken in its real sense, the transition from the merely moral virtues to the denial of the will to live."<sup>14</sup> Thus, Schopenhauer wants to justify that the spirit of his ethics is to a great extent akin to that of the morality of the Old and New Testament. He pleads that ethical virtues are meant for practice and action. "My philosophy shows the metaphysical foundations of justice and the love of mankind, and points to the goal to which these virtues necessarily lead, if these are practised in perfection."<sup>15</sup>



Man always stands in need and in return he also owes some things to his fellow beings. The ethics which governs the give-and-take, and the relation between man and man is comprised of the principles of tolerance, patience, regard and love of neighbour.<sup>16</sup> The ethics of compassion and sympathy of Schopenhauer undoubtedly shows striking resemblance to similar ethical doctrines in Brahmanism and Christianity. Where the question of love and brotherhood comes, we find deeply divergent systems of religion and ethics moving on parallel lines. And Schopenhauer is right in finding parallels of his ethics in various religions and disciplines.

Truths which have an internal significance are moral and intellectual, as opposed to truths which are physical and thus having an external significance. The moral truths are produced in man, according to Schopenhauer, by "high and truly spiritual philosophisings, and also by the catastrophe of every good tragedy; also indeed by the observation of human conduct in the extreme expressions of its morality and immorality, in other words, of its evil and goodness."<sup>17</sup> While physical truths stand on the lowest grade of the objectification of the will, moral truths are more refined and developed and they are grand elucidations of the theme of the highest stages of the objectification of the will.

The ethics and morality thus assume an important place in the philosophical system of Schopenhauer. The high value which he has given to ethical and moral knowledge of man is of great significance for the appreciation of the ethical doctrine of Schopenhauer and for our appraisal of its place in relation to other ethical systems. The ethical doctrine of Schopenhauer is the result of study of life in its manifold forms. Not only intuitive experiences of men are reckoned with, but also spiritual and philosophical works have played a great part in the formation of Schopenhauer's ethical doctrine. Schopenhauer holds that even nature has her hand in teaching man the lessons in ethics and morals. These lessons come in the shape of natural catastrophes, which often seem to make man first cognisant of his

inner impure intentions and greed. Man being the highest grade of the objectification of the will is the centre of ethical and philosophical knowledge. And the meaning of ethics lies in the true understanding of the highest grade of the objectification of the will. The all powerful and omnipresent will which is irrational on its lowest grades of objectification affords man with true spiritual knowledge in its own highest grade of its objectification. Schopenhauer's aim at developing a monistic system of thought which is atheistic and pessimistic is fully realised as far as the monistic view of reality is concerned, and he is completely justified in drawing pessimistic conclusions on the basis of knowledge of things on a lower level of their objectification. The internal truths which are ethical are born in man alone. The world no doubt possesses a physical significance in appearance. But, for Schopenhauer it has moral significance. In his teachings of ethics Schopenhauer looks like a mystic or a saint. He is a Western Buddhist who is out to search for what the world is really worth. The world is governed by an eternal moral order for the Buddhists. But it is not so for Schopenhauer, though it has moral residuum. Schopenhauer arrives at this truth not by any logic or reason but by via mystica. The truth that world has a moral significance is not a logical truth and does not fit in the general pattern of Schopenhauer's thought, where the ultimate supremacy of the will-to-live reigns. But the mystical intuition of Schopenhauer could in no way be underrated. For only a mystical mind is capable of appreciating the highest grade of objectification of the will. Spiritual knowledge or intuitive experience could not be arrived at by logical formulas and reasoning and the logical method however rigorous it may be cannot help in the communication of intuitive experience or spiritual wisdom.

Schopenhauer refutes the Kantian principle of "dignity of man" as signifying nothing and places instead sympathy. Sympathy is what man needs. Man is a suffering creature and he is beset with anxieties and

pain. In this way only "we shall continually feel ourselves related to him, sympathise with him."<sup>18</sup> Only the standpoint of sympathy and compassion could stop the feeling of contempt and hatred among men. The notion of the dignity of man is jejune. Schopenhauer praises the method of Buddhists and mystics who took cardinal vices as a point of departure for their ethics rather than cardinal virtues.<sup>19</sup> Perhaps for this reason Schopenhauer finds Platonic virtues of justice, bravery, moderation and wisdom as based on a superficial view of ethics. Schopenhauer holds that while virtues ought to be a part of the will, wisdom can only be based on intellect.<sup>20</sup> Schopenhauer disowns the Platonic view of bravery and quotes Geulix who substitutes Cardinal virtues of Plato by *diligentia*, *obedientia*, *justitia*, *humilitas*.<sup>21</sup>

### Plato and Schopenhauer

In the moral philosophy of Plato, the Socratic ideal of the identity of knowledge and virtue is maintained and the blind lure of life is not allowed to gain any hold on man.<sup>22</sup> What is really the content of knowledge which can make the life of man meaningful and without which it is always groping in the dark? It lies in judging and in analysing the moments of pleasure and happiness as well as those of pain, with a view to find out their significance beyond the passing and fleeting moments. With the realisation that one's good lies in the universal beyond the limitations of the subject's individual opinions of the moment, we arrive at true knowledge. A particular experience cannot be understood in isolation from its essential characteristics in the space-time context. It is reason which undertakes this comprehension and aims at the idea of totality.<sup>23</sup> The isolation of the universal is necessary in the human quest for real knowledge. In knowledge, be it moral or scientific, the real always is the universal and is arrived at after analysis. The rational ideas of Plato are arrived at by the help of reason or intellect which finds reality behind

the changing colours, measure, rhythm, form and law. The senses perceive the changing phantasmagoria of the world and reason conceives the real and its significance. If reason comes to man in the Platonic way, his subsequent conduct is bound to be intelligent, unfaltering and unerring. An enlightened man never act in a haphazard way, for he is one with the eternal scheme of nature.

Nature has a definite scheme, and man has to find it to realise the eternal. Virtuous acts are instinct with knowledge and wisdom. The acts of a wise man are guided by his superior reasoning power and intelligent outlook. The world is not a blind process and the confusion and the tumult of the will-to-live is foreign to the spirit of Plato's philosophy. Nor could man drift carelessly in the random movements of the blind chaos. The recognition that the world is not the creation of blind forces exalts the position of man, and a new insight into the nature of things and reality is born in him. But this realisation comes only after the attainment of real knowledge, which is virtue. Thus, in Plato metaphysics and ethics abide side by side. They are correlated. The destiny of man lies in the true understanding of the scheme of reality. He ought to find out his real place in the hierarchy of reality. Only in finding out his characteristic role in the scheme of nature that he can really come to his own. The true insight presupposes the necessity of virtue and virtue comes as a result of insight only. Thus, wisdom lies in action. And a sage is a person who is always in action. When a man attains his characteristic goodness, he then realises his nature. This realisation is never complete until man attains to the knowledge of his full and true being. With the manifestation of goodness in man, the unfoldment of the hidden reality is complete, for the idea of good is the highest idea, the supreme reality. As the idea of good is the highest idea and the supreme reality, it is also Plato's God, the ideal principle of Dominant Perfection. All lower qualities aspire to reach this Dominant Perfection. Everything which has any sig-



nificance and worth is moving towards God. With this metaphysical background, the ethical ideas of Plato deserve attention. One corollary we can draw from this view is that what is refined and subtle and best is entitled to rule over the crude and evil. And when the possibility for the domination of the higher values becomes remote, discord and frustration are bound to arise, both in man as well as in the society. The attainment of self-knowledge is necessary to eliminate the tragic elements of man's fate and the division of functions in society corresponding to man's various faculties is indispensable for the growth of the social order.

In agreement with Plato, Schopenhauer denies the wild appetites and lustful cravings of man and regards them as dangerous and obnoxious to a healthy and moral life. As the integrity and the life of a society is endangered when the various strata of society are not regulated properly, the contending faculties and powers would also disrupt the inner peace of man. In the nature of man there are instincts of lust, and there is a tremendous urge to satisfy them at any cost in momentary pleasures. These activities would blind the soul and plunge a man into ruins. Not only are there sensuality and unhealthy appetites in the nature of man but there is also 'vigorous will-energy,' a spirited restless drive for power and for ceaseless activity, aggressive and impetuous. But a wise man employs the blind appetites and the ruthless will energy to the application of his own noble purpose. When duly ordered and directed under the guidance of reason it becomes helpful in the realisation of the Socratic ideal. To reason is due to that power in man which can help in the control of lower appetites and passions and which is conducive to harmony in character. Related to the tripartite division of soul by Plato is his doctrine of Cardinal Virtues. They are temperance, courage and wisdom. The epitome of these three is the fourth which is justice. For justice is the recognition of each part of our nature. The moral life for Plato is a life which is dominated by reason. Moral life is all har-

mony; for disharmony is chaos and discord. To tread the path of moral life is to fight against disharmony and discord. A life of balance and ease is the life of a moral man. In all the experiences of man, as well as in aesthetic enjoyment, the element of harmony and order should be present. Not only are they the ingredients of moral life, as Plato understands it, but they are also present in music and art. Perfection alone is good and in the absence of harmony and order no good is possible. The life of man attains perfection, when harmony and order begin to dominate his thought and ideas. In such men, goodness, truth and beauty together form a rich synthesis. Plato emphasises that only such men can march away from attractions of sexual appetites towards spiritual worship. "What if man had eyes to see the true beauty—the divine beauty, pure and clear and unalloyed, not clogged with the pollutions of mortality and all the colours and varieties of human life—thither looking and holding converse with the true beauty simple and divine?... In that communion only, beholding beauty with the eye of the mind... bringing forth and nourishing true virtue to become the friend of God and be immortal, if mortal man may, would that be an ignorable life?" (Symposium 211, Jowett's Translation).

The Platonic idea of the divine is absent totally in Schopenhauer. But the Platonic need of symmetry and character in the life and conduct of a man are not totally missing in him. A radical difference divides the ethics of Plato from Schopenhauer's; the former starts from virtues, while the latter proceeds from vices.

### Kant and Schopenhauer

The idealistic and optimistic trend of Kantian philosophy finds later in the philosophy of Arthur Schopenhauer irreconcilable opposition. Schopenhauer's philosophy comes as a challenge to the optimistic developments of the Kantian thought. The irrationalistic and pessimistic development in Schopenhauer's moral

philosophy proceeds from his doctrine of the will-to-live, the absolute and irrational metaphysical reality. The moral philosophy of Schopenhauer comes as an anti-thesis to the idealistic developments in moral philosophy which proceed on the assumption of the supremacy of the Spirit. For Kant, the practical reason moves with an unshaken consciousness of the categorical imperative. For Fichte and Hegel, we realise the triumph of the self-reliant spirit. Schopenhauer acknowledges himself as the heir of Kant. But he follows Kant only to the extent that he confines to knowledge experience only and takes as his starting point Kant's phenomenalism. The object and subject mutually imply each other and human mind knows the external world as only an idea. The idea is only a representation of the human mind. The results of Kant's Transcendental Dialectics are stressed by Schopenhauer in his moral philosophy. The intellect of man could only know the outer appearance and the mind of man has no power to cross the confines of its own categories to know the thing-in-itself.

The question of the duality of subject and object is very hard to overcome. We find in Fichte a solution which is at variance with Schopenhauer's. For Fichte, reality could be reached only by the creative fiat of the will. And the idealism of Fichte is justified in this interpretation, because the activity of the will for Fichte is spiritual and moral. For Schopenhauer on the contrary the activity of will is entirely blind, amoral and irrational.

### **The Ethics of Will-to-live**

The ultimate reality for Schopenhauer is the will-to-live. It is the blind craving. At the level of human consciousness, it represents itself as insatiable desire and as the never ending experience of want. The result is that thanks to the unfulfilment of all desires and wants, pain and frustration always arise. The domination of pain in the life of man is due to the craving in-

herent in absolute reality, to the will-to-live, which pervades all nature and its phenomena. Even if the desires are to be satisfied continually, pleasure loses its fascination. That is why the element of pain and frustration could not be eliminated from the life of man in any way.

The basic reality of man is in itself ruthless and futile. It has neither a goal nor a plan. The will-to-live is a blind principle devoid of rationality and justice. It is perfectly indifferent to human anguish and human aspirations. It moves incessantly in a blind cosmos which is its own creation. As the will is, so is the man. Man also is a fusion of all the blind, insatiable and irrational instincts. These qualities man shares as a partial manifestation of the will. Pain is the rule of life. Wars, floods and diseases and the hatred of man for man, nation for nation, are the calamities which owe their origin to the brute force of the will-to-live, and man as a prototype of the will-to-live works also for evil, if he is not chastened by intellect. Schopenhauer emphasises ever and anon the greed and lust in the nature of man, the evil which dehumanises man and brings him down to the level of a blind impulsive force.

Schopenhauer denies that human efforts can bring any good to man as an individual or as a species. Man can only work for ideals and gets nothing in return. Man is always in need. The hidden knavery and greed of man assumes many forms, religious and extra-religious. Man deliberately avails the evil in him to attain wordly goods. Schopenhauer is led to the conclusion that no good can come out of something which is brought about by a blind urge and an irrational reality. Man is a self-centred creature. He has no concern for others. All his life long, he is engaged in a war of conflicting greeds. Now and again, he may succeed in building a smoke-screen to hide the real forces at work in him. But the evil in him comes to light in spite of himself. Behind the seeming nobility of his action, he attempts to dupe and beguile his own kind.

The fate of man is dismal. His life is a tragedy.



Schopenhauer exploits the discords of human life to teach a moral and to expound a full-fledged system of ethics based on sympathy. This shifting of accent in the system of Schopenhauer is significant indeed. The supremacy of the 'ought' is neglected in the philosophy of Schopenhauer. Schopenhauer takes 'the factor of human motivation more important than the determination of moral philosophy on the basis of practical reason.' Schopenhauer hesitates not to find fault with the Kantian ethics of duty. He cannot submit to the view of duty as categorical. The idea of an 'ought' is fruitless and irrelevant in life. A moral assertion has no meaning when it is not established on the factual knowledge of human life. To prescribe imposing principles for the guidance of man carries no weight, if they could not be made effective in practice. Human conduct could not be made to correspond with sublime moral dictums. And Schopenhauer is led to the conclusion that an ethical system which ignores actual working of human conduct is not viable. For Schopenhauer what is moral must find its fulfilment in life. If in the fulfilment of the 'ought,' an eventual award is hoped for, then this morality of rewards and punishment is spurious and illusory. Schopenhauer further maintains against Kant that the Kantian morality indirectly attempts to cultivate fear in man by showing the dire consequences which moral transgressions are bound to bring in their wake. The main concern is here to bring the duty to its fulfilment, the unconditional imperative to its realisation. The Kantian ethical system may be more befittingly called a criminal code than ethics proper, says Schopenhauer. Thus, for Schopenhauer ethics could not ignore human conduct and morality could not be expressed satisfactorily in terms of law and obligation.

For Kant, the moral law could not arise on the plane of human experience but it dictates categorically from above. For Kant, the universal and imperative moral law is more than justified in affirming its necessity. But in the Kantian emphasis on duty and in its association with happiness, though not in fact but as a

right, Schopenhauer finds the seeds of egoism which Kant so disdainfully and vehemently refutes. "In spite of Kant's grand 'apriori' edifice, Egoism is sitting on the judges seat, scales in hand." Schopenhauer denies all claims of moral imperative as such until it has roots in experience, and find its sanction in human nature. This criticism of Schopenhauer's elucidates the characteristics of his ethical ideas.

Schopenhauer in his ethical ideas has no antecedents in European thought. Ethical systems are varied and can be grouped in many ways. The ancient Greek ethics looks upon the perfection of earthly life of man as the goal. And the ethics of early Christianity looks upon the present life as a means of attaining the life beyond. There are both naturalistic and supernaturalistic types of ethics, one emphasising the importance of the present life and its rules, the other insisting on the significance of deducing principles of morality from sources which lie beyond the frontiers of natural reason. In the Hindu pattern of ethics, the perfection of the natural man is as important as the claim of eternal life. Man should not deny his heart and senses, but satisfy them within limits. Not rigorous asceticism is preached by Hindu ethics but a balanced and harmonised way of life is emphasised by them. The Hindu view is highly realistic. The quest of the life eternal has not in any place been made to swallow the responsibility and importance of the present existence. And ethical goal holds its sway on all the institutions and customs of the life of the Indian. Earthly longings have their place in life but they should not become the ends of our quest. Man, if he wants to attain to superior levels, must give way to the expression of his inner spirit. The perfection of the natural man should necessarily be followed by the perfection of the spiritual man. "From the dark I go to the varicoloured. From the varicoloured I go to the dark. Shaking off evil, as a horse his hairs; shaking off the body (sarira), as the moon releases itself from the mouth of Rahu; I, a perfected soul (Krtatman), pass into the uncreated Brahma-

world—yea, into it I pass !”<sup>24</sup>

In his attempt to find out a basis of morality that will be useful to all, Schopenhauer analyses human conduct and elucidates the various incentives which lead man to action. In this, Schopenhauer's way diverges from Kant's. In the Kantian ethics, moral acts postulate freedom. They are not governed by causal necessity. They have a spiritual grandeur. They are the expressions of his intelligible character. The spirit of man could only be governed by categorical imperative, the "ought." But Schopenhauer says that human acts, moral or immoral, are all determined. While all acts of life are determined by casual necessity, moral acts alone could not form an exception to them. But he endeavours to base a distinction of the moral acts on the kinds of motivation which determine them. All our actions are determined by antecedent factors or motives, and there is no escape from this. But nonetheless they are the expressions of our being.

Men are moved to action by consideration of weal or woe of one's own self or of other's. There are only three objectives of human actions: (1) One's own weal; (2) Another's woe; (3) Another's weal.<sup>25</sup> Schopenhauer tries to condense his idea of motives behind human actions into three kinds. The division of human motives into three parts has no justification theoretically or practically. But what is important is here to note the fact how Schopenhauer characterises the first and second as antimoral. To do harm to others or to look at one's own profit at the cost of another is at variance with morality. And to try to help and do good to others so that they may tide over their grief and sorrow and share in general prosperity, are eminent moral acts. In connection with the ethics of compassion and sympathy for all, Schopenhauer also criticises and condemns the egoistic attitude of human beings. Schopenhauer cannot brook egoistic pursuits and takes to task those whose actions are motivated by selfish desires. He cannot but hate malice in man and despises those who help none and inflict injury on others. While malice disregards

the well-being of others, the egoist would be prepared to destroy all the world if the slightest benefit can accrue to him therefrom. Egoism is the greatest of all evils, says Schopenhauer. Sympathy and compassion claim great attention in his philosophy. Whether evil has a religious connotation and bearing, or is it the fruit of egoism in the nature of man as is done by Schopenhauer, it makes no difference. Justice can only be done to the ethical views of a writer if prevalent notions are not allowed to confuse our judgment, and if one can see beyond the difference of terminology the principles involved. When we try to assess fairly the worth of Schopenhauer's ethical doctrine, we are bound to concede the all comprehensive character of his system, a system which neglects no ethical moment of any importance. It is true that he has tried to describe good and evil, the moral, religious and aesthetic values in terms which have been seldom employed by moral philosophers. As, for example, Schopenhauer's view of egoism and of man impelled by egoistic drive is old. But the language is Schopenhauer's own. It is an attitude common to religion that the ego of man must necessarily be silenced to arrive at the alter of the holy of the holies. The ego is considered an insuperable hindrance in the realisation of Brahma in some systems of Indian philosophy. The ego is an evil everywhere. And so it is in Schopenhauer. We cannot however blame him for lack of any ethical system of his own. May be in the context of his system, the appeal to human compassion and sympathy looks a little strange. It will be vain to deny the discrepancy that we meet between his pessimism based on the insatiable craving of the will to live and the enthusiasm with which an ethics of compassion has been advocated. The value of his ethics cannot however be ignored. It has a religious grandeur. Whether it fits in its system or not is another question. His system may be based on philosophical errors; but his ethics has a human appeal which every philosophy has taken into account. It is its ethics in fact which brings light in the obscure and melancholy corners of his spe-



culatation. It lends it a human touch, and makes his pessimism more subdued.

Schopenhauer does not content himself with decrying the evil in man but he also emphasises the need of counteracting them effectively. The triumph of man lies in completely transcending it. Man may be a product of a blind force, but he is not bound to act in a blind way. Equipped as he is with intellect and reason, he can act with light and insight. The motive power which Schopenhauer assumes for the realisation of moral worth is compassion. Schopenhauer hails compassion as a sublime force. A just man aims at helping his fellow beings and refrains from inflicting any injury on them at any cost. The motive force of compassion should sprout from within the human heart. And when it comes out of the inner-most recesses of our being, then it has the power which can subdue the egoistic impulses which normally sway human life. In the absence of such spontaneous compassion, laws, religious restraints, rewards and punishments the feeling of self-respect and of human dignity and the categorical imperative are all of no avail and do no good to man. Schopenhauer believes that in the absence of a real and genuine motive force, the acceptance of moral axioms which have never been experienced by man, deserve not any attention. To suffer with others and for others is the message of Schopenhauer. To help in mitigating others' sufferings, regardless of one's own hardships and without bewailing one's own lot or fate, should be the ruling principles of man's life. And unless man's heart has become so sensitive, as to respond to others' privations and sufferings, he could not deem to have attained any standard of moral worth. A life of compassion lies only in the pursuit of this ideal. The good man is he whose life is pervaded by compassion, and in the very fabric of whose acts compassion runs through. Schopenhauer reads too much into the idea of compassion and sympathy, and this has misled the commentators to an extent that some have tried to reject the ethical philosophy of Schopenhauer in toto and

have failed to see in it any principles on which an ethical system can be built. A thinker like Schopenhauer who believes in the necessity of genuine human compassion could never have taught anything which is derogatory to human value of goodness, truth and the sublime.

Schopenhauer further distinguishes compassion as negative and positive, between compassion as justice and loving-kindness. A just man lives on his own accord and seldom lays any burden on another. He does his own share of work, fulfils his own obligations and makes no one a victim of his ill will. But loving-kindness, which is positive, aims at helping others, and mitigating their hardships, and even goes to the length of personal self-sacrifice.

Acts which follow compassion reveal an ever deepening sense of common difficulties of mankind. The oneness created by the tragic fate of man in suffering is itself enough to induce man to leave all his property and his kith and kin for good and devote himself only to alleviating the sufferings of his toiling kind. This new orientation of a moral hero may ultimately lead him to a life of ascetic self-denial and total renunciation of worldly pursuits. But there is nothing strange in Schopenhauer's call to each and everyone of us to lend a helping hand to the care-ridden humanity. This has been accepted as a noble ideal for any man to follow. Sacrificing one's own interest for the good of all and the uplift of others could only be possible when lofty ideals become the ruling principles of our life. It is not the path for one and sundry. Schopenhauer thus draws the utmost consequences from his idea of compassion, and like Buddha, he neglects not the ideal of final renunciation of all worldly goods and interests. Schopenhauer believed in the cessation of craving and wants of whatsoever kind they may be. How simple it is to find fault with Schopenhauer for a doctrine which glorifies the extinction of life and impute to him a doctrine which makes of man an unworthy part of the universe. But for our philosopher, only the ego in man



which is the real will-to-live deserves contempt. The ego ought to be subdued if victory over passion and want is to be achieved. Though it is hardly possible to root it out completely, as it is a part and parcel of man's nature, it is not altogether beyond the realm of possibility to subdue it by the force of reason and intellect, and sublimate it by superior moral qualities. It is not at all a negative doctrine of life which Schopenhauer aims at. Schopenhauer's attitude to life speaks of a moral saint, who assimilates the tone of Buddha's teachings and sees the triumph over the irrational blind will-to-live in the total renunciation of the ego and desires. It is with the end to realise the goodness in man and to introduce him to the heights of moral sublimity that he asks us to abandon desires and wants and attain in this way the peace of Nirvana.

The critic who sees in Schopenhauer's philosophy full disregard of life, nay, its complete extinction as the final goal is justified only to the extent to which our philosopher makes of the will to live a metaphysical absolute, indifferent to moral values and unconcerned with beauty and truth. But in order to appreciate Schopenhauer's ethics it is important to see human nature as it is and its potentialities. The Will has its sway over all the objects of the earth, but in man it has found an adversary which is too strong to be overpowered. The intellect and the power of reason are the exclusive attributes of man. These are absent in animals. Hence man alone of all the creatures of earth can negate the might and sway of the will. Man is no doubt a product of the will, but he has developed certain qualities which are quite contrary to the nature of the will. Standing high on the rung of evolution man has gained the status of being the crown of creation. Even a brute can be taught good habits. No wonder then that it has fallen to the lot of man to subdue the irrational forces of appetites and instincts, which are part of his equipment. Schopenhauer has visualised the supreme function of man in his ethical ideas. In Christianity and other religions the necessity of control over passions and baser elements of human

life has been amply stressed. Schopenhauer goes a step further and makes of the entire composition of man an evolved form of the irrational reality. But in fact reality could not be blind and irrational, as it would fail to explain the presence of any plan or design in nature. A blind absolute reality is in fact no reality at all. It cannot satisfy the psychological and moral needs of human beings. There is no discrepancy in the ethical system of Schopenhauer save his attempt to explain all things as being derived from the irrational reality of the absolute will and at the same time admit deliverance from the overall domination of the same absolute will.

The message of Schopenhauer's ethics is a message of love and brotherhood. It is based on help and sacrifice. In this respect Schopenhauer is no less sincere than the seers of religion. His attempt to proclaim a system of ethics on the foundation of metaphysics is itself commendable. No doubt, he has left many theoretical loopholes in the systematic exposition of the philosophy and ethics of the blind will-to-live. But they are not serious. An ethical system is to be assessed on the merit of its power and efficacy in guiding men's lives. Tazanoff has urged not without sound reasons for a revision of the irrationalistic pessimistic metaphysics of the will-to-live in order to fit the ethical views of Schopenhauer into the general scheme of his philosophy.

Schopenhauer's emphasis on the power of intellect reminds us of the Platonic vision of the charioteers. "The body is a chariot light, mind is the charioteer." The Buddhist emphasis on the need of proper training of the mind and the importance which they have assigned to the inner scrutiny of mental processes has produced a grand system of ethics. The practical aspects of Schopenhauer's ethics breathes the spirit of Buddhism. The following words of Mrs. Rhys Davids justify the stand of Buddhist ethics and religion. "The doctrine of self-mastery with a varying co-efficient of asceticism is common to all religious and practical philosophies worthy of being so named. Buddhism as an intellectual and philosophical religion combats the unruly faculties, and with

the mental analysis of the 'Know thyself' Gnomon, than with the averted gaze of a faith appealing chiefly to emotion and will."

The ethics of compassion of Schopenhauer is especially reminiscent of the Buddhist ethics, embodied in the Eight-fold path. In the words of Rev. S. Beal: 'Undoubtedly these eight paths or ways form the earliest code of rules given by Buddha for the direction of his followers.' The middle path of Buddha was meant only for the simple people who were aspiring to lead a noble and moral life without any speculative bias. Without developing an elaborate metaphysics to defend his moral and ethical ideals, Buddhist ethics is in no way inferior to other systems supported by a metaphysic. Even so, Schopenhauer's ethical views remain close to practical life and can stand the test of day-to-day existence. Schopenhauer's heroic struggle to arrive at a satisfactory solution of the problems which beset human existence in its misery and suffering could not have succeeded in the absence of an ethical doctrine which should govern human life. No salvation from the misery of existence and the pain of life is possible without the guidance of ethical principles. Schopenhauer's attempt to associate salvation with an activist approach to life, with a plan of action that seeks to mitigate human suffering by the sacrifice of the ego and its interests is ingenious indeed. It makes Schopenhauer's philosophy more than a passive cry of despair. His pessimism may be said to have an element of hope. It has confidence in the efficacy of the human action which has power enough to ease the tension of the will-to-live.

## CHAPTER III

# RELIGION

He who hopes for the best grows old, cheated by life; and he who is always prepared for the worst grows old in time; but he who believes preserves ever lasting youth."<sup>1</sup>

—Soren Kierkegard

Schopenhauer recognised the ameliorating spirit of religion. He accepted that religion can help man to overcome the sufferings. He had no preference for any major or minor religion. He did not hesitate to quote from the scripture of different religions to emphasise that religion proves to be a panacea when wrong beliefs and dogmatic elements are removed from it.

Beyond all division, man is bound by a primordial unity which is bigger than any unity of dogma or creed. The metaphysical entity which embodies this truth is for Schopenhauer the will. In man, the will manifests itself as self-consciousness. With his self-consciousness, the responsibilities shared by man are more heavy than any other being in the world. The consciousness of his privileged status in the order of the universe, and the incessant urge and craving within him to escape his tragic fate and find a refuge for himself, loom large in the

philosophy of Arthur Schopenhauer. Schopenhauer's philosophy of religion is a continuation of his views on ethics and art.<sup>2</sup>

We know that for him the individual is only a phenomenon. The essence of the world is the will. The will is the thing-in-itself. The life of man and the external world 'is only the mirror of the will.' The life and death of man, says Schopenhauer, exists only for the knowledge which is bound to the principia individuationis.

In order to acquire real knowledge Schopenhauer wants us "to consider life philosophically, i.e., according to its ideas, and in this sphere we shall find that neither the will, the thing-in-itself in all phenomena nor the subject of knowing, that which perceives all phenomena is effected at all by birth or by death."

### Relation of Philosophy and Religion

The end of philosophical speculation in India is to realise truth. It aims at introducing the seeker to an immediate vision of truth. One starts as a seeker and becomes a seer. In India, especially with the Hindus, philosophy is not a mere intellectual pursuit of some abstract ideal but the actual realisation of the truth in life. With the beginning of the modern era, we see that, in the West, philosophy has alienated itself from religion. In India, philosophy and religion have always maintained close alliance. Philosophy seeks truth and religion pursues God. Ultimately God and Truth become one and the same, religion and philosophy merge in one another. Religion appeals to the multitude through faith and philosophy to the intellectual few through reason. But the isolation of philosophy from religion can be maintained with difficulty. Man in fact thinks in two ways which no doubt often cross each other. The experience of truth often comes by sheer strength of faith, but its validity can be upheld only by rational judgments. It must be admitted that metaphysical truths are not always amenable to reason. Only a mystic insight can probe into the nature and illuminate them. Religion also, if it is divorc-



ed from philosophy, becomes only dogmatic, and creates new doubts in its followers. It never arrives at certainty and breeds superstition. For the multitude however who are ill-equipped to exert their intellect religion comes as a boon. Religion without philosophy would give rise to a state where emotions and sentiments will have full play. Religion cannot be dispensed with, in any case. It alone can tame the blind instincts of man. Schopenhauer rightly commends religion for its leading role in every age. Thanks to it, it has been possible for man to accommodate himself. Schopenhauer considers that the harm done by religion is not as serious as the harm which might have resulted in its absence, and qualifies it as a necessary evil. Schopenhauer admires the higher types of religion like Brahmanism and sees in them embodied the philosophical principles. Religion gives to the aspirant the passion of faith in the absolute reality and the aspirant regards it as the dispenser of justice. Philosophy on its part creates a balanced judgment in the aspirant and prevents him from losing his bearing. In Vedanta, we see the complete fusion of philosophy, religion and faith. A philosopher with his deep insight into the human mind and intellect evokes as much interest and respect in others as a religious teacher. "When we enter the world of ideals the differences among religions become negligible and the agreement striking. There is only one ideal for man to make himself profoundly human, perfectly human."

Every religion has a moral as well as a philosophical aspect. Religion could be defined in many ways, but its importance lies in its belief in a super-sensible existence. Man feels himself dependent on the primal being. He worships him and evokes his help in distress and need. If a moral doctrine can hold its sway with as much force as a religious doctrine on human consciousness, it is also entitled to be called a religion. Man's belief in the super-sensible is based on the mystery that pervades the order of the world, and on the deeper mystery of the instinctive urges that control him. Religion is an answer to the spiritual need of man. The religious attitude to the



super-sensible is that of humility and awe. Religious consciousness of man is not born of fear, but of awe which overpowers him when he feels himself face to face with the riddle of life.

### The Need of Metaphysics and Religion

Schopenhauer qualifies man as a metaphysical entity. Man's craving for something which lies beyond the moment, in a word, his need for the metaphysical and the trans-sensible is fulfilled in philosophical meditation and religious contemplation. Philosophy is an answer to the perennial questions about nature and reality. But the function of philosophy with all its value is confined to the few. Religion, in the words of Schopenhauer, has to soothe the sufferings of the majority of mankind. What philosophy does to the few, religion does to the many. Schopenhauer claims that his philosophy is not an academic pursuit but a way to meet the sufferings of the world. Schopenhauer's idea of religion cannot be isolated from the aim and theme of his philosophical system. Moreover, his religion is a natural corollary of his metaphysical voluntarism which sees in the will-to-live the foundation of man's agony and travail. It is the same pathos that breathes through Buddhism and Schopenhauer. The starting point of Schopenhauer and Buddhism is not a thought or an idea but the fact of pain and suffering in the life of man. In Buddhism and in Schopenhauer's system, we find not only a theoretical definition of suffering and pain which surround the birth and death of man but also the predominance of tragic elements in the total life of man. The moment of suffering completely overshadows joys and pleasures of life. It is alone positive. The reality is only *Sat*, but neither *Chit* (conscious) nor *Anand*. The bliss is not immanent in reality but it is a goal to which man alone of all other beings on earth aspires in salvation.

The religious philosophy of Schopenhauer, like the teaching of Gautama, the Buddha, grows on the soil of suffering. "Tat Twam Asi" was the wisdom of the Vedas

which Schopenhauer quotes with approval as a justification of his own assertion that each man is just like others and so it behoves one to extend sympathy to others to get in return a like response for his own broken fate. Mankind, for Schopenhauer, is a fraternity in suffering.

The parallelism between Schopenhauer's views on religion and the Buddhist religion is amazing indeed. Both emphasise the fact that suffering makes the warp and woof of the life of man. Only foolish infatuation with the transitory pleasures prevents man from realising the truth. Sufferings in life are an indication that man is not living as he ought to have lived. In Buddhism as in Schopenhauer, suffering is not the end-all and the be-all of life but an indication of the metaphysical constitution of reality. It calls on us to employ our own initiative and intellect for general amelioration. While man is as he is with all his restless urge and insatiable desires, a peaceful and sane life is hardly possible.

The hold of religion has suffered in modern times. But the sway of metaphysics has remained unshaken in the man of today. For the medieval philosophers, God was the centre of all thought, and they always began their philosophy with the problem of His Existence. When the idea of God receded from the mind of the modern man, the only idea which took possession of his thought was of one's own existence. Thus, man became the subject of his own enquiry, and philosophy became self-analysis. Modern man is only interested in himself. Once philosophy served religion. But now its main concern seems to be the study of man and nature. The word 'soul' and 'spirit' have become devoid of any meaningful content. The ethico-religious interpretation of man has now gone out of vogue, and this way of looking at things is regarded not in keeping with science. Moral standards and the ethical principles are now regarded subject to change and historically conditioned. Scepticism has crept into the realm of moral and religious values as a direct outcome of the increased mastery over physical forces gained by scientific knowledge and technique. The development in the field of modern psychology has also con-

tributed to the belief that man is not master of his own conscious ego,—and that the conscious life of man is governed by the unconscious. The dignity and autonomy of man have been jeopardised and the development in the field of physical sciences and psychology has made man a product of unconscious forces.

Even the study of history in the recent past has confirmed the thesis that man and human civilisation are the products brought about not by any divine agency but by natural and environmental forces. Human achievements and accomplishments have been explained in terms of sociology, economics and physical geography.

The belief in a future world and a future life have lost their conviction. And the thought is gaining ground that the ideal of our desires should find its fulfilment here and now.

Schopenhauer sees no good in the decline of religion. Though paradoxically enough, his own metaphysical convictions belie the fundamentals of religious consciousness. True, a philosophy of suffering and salvation creates a halo of religion. But it is in appearance only. It is only religion of a definite brand, for which Schopenhauer speaks, an impersonal religion of Buddha or a religion of the Upanishads which Schopenhauer has as much understood as misunderstood. Schopenhauer is concerned only with the denial of the will. All other issues of religion whatever their import might be, do not move Schopenhauer. ~~For if a belief in religion loses its weight it means that the way to salvation, the way through which complete denial of the will is possible, is barred.~~ No doubt man can make his own destiny and carve out his future but he could not do so in the absence of guidance. Only the development of the intellectual and rational in him could not provide man what he is longing for. Until the acts and movements of man, his thoughts and his ideals, are pervaded with religious spirit and moral values Schopenhauer sees no future for man. The deep-rooted cause of pain and suffering could not be discovered only through the employment of scientific knowledge.

But the sway of passions and ego-impulses in man hardly gives religion any room to function. When it is supposed, as it is today, that religion is a menace to mankind and society, an opiate to the masses, there is no cause for wonder if it has come into disrepute. Moreover, religion has come to be associated with the idea of dreamy 'escapism' which stands for resignation and avoidance of all struggle. Since Renaissance, religion is debated upon only to be rejected. The denial of the transcendent is not a novelty of our age.

At present, the reaction of an average man against the religious situation is by no means absolutely negative. Only he has great doubt about the efficacy of old religious and moral truths in the changed conditions of the world. A school of thought holds that with the progress of the physical and biological sciences and with man's victory over natural forces to a certain extent, how could the religious truths of a bygone age still work? The idea of the philosopher and of the man in the street seems to be based on the power and magnitude of the intellect of man and reason. Doubt led Descartes into the slough of despond and he could only find an escape from the predicament which he had created for himself by his famous assertion, "I think therefore I am." It won for him the lost world. The power of the intellect to probe into the secrets of the infinite has been emphasised by the modern philosophers.

No doubt that reason and intellect differentiate man from the animal, and give him weapons to unveil the mystery of the universe. But even the powerful equipment of intellect and reason could not make man independent, and man has realised that he is a mere plaything in the whirl-pool of historical accidents and social processes. In his own being, he has discerned such antagonistic elements which reason and intellect are unable to reconcile and keep in check. While trying to rise high on the ladder of his own reason and intellect, man has realised that rationality left to itself is unable to resolve the inner contradiction and subdue the upsurge of the instinctive forces within him.



Man has something in himself which is even beyond his own comprehension. Religions have tried to direct man in a way which can lead him to discover for himself the truth which indwells in him. Philosophy alone could not comprehend a situation where forces beyond the grasp of intellect are at work. On the other hand, religion is concerned with the roots of human existence which lie beyond the reach of man's experience or reason, and could be known only through immediate intuitive light of knowledge.

A halo of mystery envelops the human situation. Man is born to die one day. Man cherishes love and is prepared for any sacrifice; but when death comes, nothing remains behind to serve him as a memento. When man ponders on the finitude of his worldly existence, he also feels that there must be something beyond. This urge is strong indeed in the human soul. The feeling of loneliness and insignificance in the world robs man of any ability to see things in true perspective. In reality, the sovereignty of man is limited by the historicity of his existence. It looks strange that man with all his great power of intellect and independence should fail to solve his own conflicts and difficulties. Whenever civilised society is divorced from religious and moral consciousness, it has fallen a prey to man's own blind instincts of war and annihilation. The philosopher and the seer may awaken in their own way to the inevitability of death, suffering; but only religion brings home the truth that our existence has its centre not in the physical order but is intimately associated with something which lies beyond the finite existence of man. The faith which is born of religion reveals the truth that man has trans-empirical links. The need of the day ~~does not~~ call for a radical change in the ~~religious~~ consciousness which seldom ~~conflicts~~ with scientific truths but a deeper awakening of that religious moment which is already at work in one and all.

The value of Schopenhauer's view of religion lies in the fact that he pleads for the essence of religious faith shorn of all unnecessary accretions. Never once

did he deny the need of religion for mankind. Religion is the manifestation of all that is noble in man.

Materialism in modern times has challenged the truth of religion. It argues that in the past, religion might have served a purpose but in the present context of things it has lost its *raison d'être*. Such views have contributed to the weakening of its hold on man. And the belief in religion as an inspiring institution is dimmed. Religion is criticised on the ground that it is based on superstition and fear, it is an infantile activity, a regression to the primitive levels of thought. These charges are no doubt unwarranted. Schopenhauer attributes this unfavourable assessment of religion to lack of imagination. There is more in heaven and hell than is dreamt of in science and philosophy. Science studies only empirical relations and what lies beyond is naturally inaccessible to science. The mystic and the spiritual side of man and nature is as real as the natural phenomena which come under the observations of a scientist. It is true that the external observations and conventional patterns of scientific explanation cannot probe into the metaphysical and the transcendent, but for this reason the metaphysical and the transcendent do not lose their value and remain unaffected. Schopenhauer anticipating the ideas that prevail today holds that religion should maintain its purity and not exhaust itself in rites and rituals. It should provide man not only moral incentive but an intellectual belief in a pure and noble life. Schopenhauer thinks that the extraneous and the non-essential in religion, its historical ways and conventions do not determine the character of religion as such, though they are innocuous. The purpose which Schopenhauer assigns to religion is to awaken the best in man. Schopenhauer discerns in Vedanta an elevated and ennobling concept of religion.

In his philosophy of positivism, August Comte developed the idea that mankind will outgrow religion ultimately in its onward march. But present situation has amply demonstrated the fact that material and cultural development of society could not discard the religious



necessity. Religion has nothing to suffer from the rate of man's cultural and scientific development. Religion has for its purpose the discovery of the spiritual reality which is in man. Religion aims at the universal, not the particular. A man having religious faith may become destitute of all worldly riches, but when he stands in prayer he feels inner security and joy. A man of religious faith feels for certain that the spiritual reality is the creator of man and the world. And this reality only sustains man and confers on him bliss and beatitude. There can be hardly any correspondence between the experience of the spiritual reality and the knowledge gained through senses about physical nature. While the encounter with the absolute spiritual reality is intuitive and direct, the study of nature through senses is mediate and tentative.

### The Need of Religion

Man seems to realise slowly his inner religious consciousness. The perusal of the history of religion show that religion had a slow and steady growth. Religion in its primitive beginnings works in the service of the will-to-live. But it is not what religion in its perfection aims at. It is only with the full development of the spiritual in man that religion can come to its own. Religion in all its phases, high or low, is indispensable to man. It persists in many forms. Monotheism and Pantheism are born in the emphasis that is given to one or the other essential moments of religious life.

Schopenhauer's metaphysical system could be called monistic. Schopenhauer by his attempt to unify all physical and psychical phenomena into one single principle of the will has built a monistic pattern of philosophy. In the Hindu thought we find that there is one all-pervading and all-comprehending power that runs through the whole cosmos. Schopenhauer emphasises that religion has to guide the lives of men and manifest the best in man. The knowledge of the Absolute Reality as will and its denial in the three-fold way of science, art and reli-

gion only brings about the deliverance from pain and suffering, the hallmarks of all that is. To religion is assigned the function to guide man in his struggle for peace and salvation.

By religion, Schopenhauer means religion as such and not religion in any of its historical determinations. It is the spirit that informs religion that really matters. It is the spirit of love, toleration and sympathy. Schopenhauer saw in the teaching of all great religions a call for the denial of the will-to-live. He had faith in the spiritual message of all great religions on the ground that only in religion the radical evil which is deeply rooted in man can be eliminated once for all.

Schopenhauer rejects decisively the supernatural revelation of truths without any reference to the intellectual and logical realities of human life. The seers of ancient India pursued a similar path and had developed a keen sense of observation for the multitudinous phenomena of nature. They did not of course discard logical subtleties and dialectical discussions but their thought always kept close to the realities of concrete life. In the spirit of modern science, they began their quest with the study of the physical order of the universe. Their approach may be called analytical and experimental. For the seers of the Upanishads, religion was not alienated from science, logic, or philosophy. Logic was the tool to explain all that is. If any explanation looked as inconsistent with science they rejected it outright. Fallacious and causistic demonstrations of truths were held in low esteem. Their approach towards religion was based on reason and experience. It is curious indeed that, already in the hoary past, the seers of the Upanishads foreshadowed the conclusions of Kant and anticipated the modern approach to reality. Experience and reason should go together; the one without the other cannot work. Their catholicity of outlook could not brook the idea that truth can be discovered or monopolised by an individual or a group exclusively. Schopenhauer is true to the spirit of the Upanishads when he says that each religion has some good in it. In full accord with the

spirit of the Upanishads, he believed that there is unity in diversity, a central theme of his philosophy of religion.

The Vedantist approach to religion is characterised by a sober and enlightened basis of religion. The principles of inductive and deductive logic are accepted. Reason is allowed a wide though limited application. Though religion can be defended on logical and rational grounds the religious consciousness of man is something which transcends the confines of reason and science. The method of science is analytical and that of logic discursive. But the knowledge which religion aims at is universal. The religion may stand supremely indifferent to its historical worth or rational confirmation, if it can retain only the unfaltering consciousness of the ultimate being.

With his beliefs in religion shaken, the modern man is aspiring to have a religion, shorn off all obnoxious practices and wild superstitions. Only a universal religion can satisfy this inner craving and can come to the rescue of man in the crisis which he is passing through. The approach of Schopenhauer is modern in spirit and tone. For Schopenhauer, religion is nothing if it cannot vouchsafe salvation for one who is sincere in his quest. Every religion which is worth the name tends to provide man with the purpose of his creation. Schopenhauer does not conceive religion as a mystical phantasm but as something which deals with the concrete realities of every day life. Without losing contact with will-less illumination it stoops down on earth and acts as a guide to the victims of pain, suffering and scepticism. It is religion that leads the way to the negation of the will-to-live. But denial of the will-to-live is not denial of life. What is wrong is the will-to-live, not the life itself. Vicious indeed is the working of the will-to-live in man. Religion alone can lead man safely to the halcyon peace of salvation. And in salvation Schopenhauer sees the fulfilment of the religious ideal. All religions move towards the same goal of liberation and deliverance. An escape from the tentacles of the will-to-live guarantees man serenity and tranquillity. Schopenhauer pleads nei-

ther for this religion or that, for a creed or denomination of a particular brand but for a religion which has no name in particular, and which embodies the essence of all religions; a religion which could imbibe the best of all religions, a religion which is attuned with science, philosophy and metaphysics.

The Vedantic spirit of religious tolerance and sympathetic understanding pervades Schopenhauer's conception of religion. For Schopenhauer, a man of religion need not be labelled under any denomination or creed but should realise in himself the spirit of denial and negation. For him, religion conduces to universal understanding.

Religion is an answer to the metaphysical need of man. Religion often assumes a distorted form in myths and fables. But this kind of religion augers ill for its own future. "Religions are necessary for the people, and an inestimable benefit to them. But if they oppose to the progress of mankind in the knowledge of the truth they must with the utmost possible forbearance be set aside."<sup>3</sup> It is freely admitted that it is difficult for truth and nothing but truth to work on the general consciousness of mankind. And hence it is to be made palatable in a language which the man in the street can understand. The perception of truth by the men of ordinary understanding is not possible unless truth comes to them in some disguise. Schopenhauer justifies the need of mysteries in religion and alludes to their allegorical character. Religion has the function to make intelligible that which is incomprehensible to the human mind and intellect. Schopenhauer passionately advocates the cause of religion and asserts in unequivocal terms that only by taking into account the allegorical character of myths and religion can we know the true nature and import of religion itself. Only when the allegorical aspect of religion is consistently held in view will the apparent absurdities inherent in all religious be considered for what they are worth. Now they will be taken not as truths as such but as pictorial representations. A criticism which is labelled against religion on its external means of expres-



sion misses its essentials. Schopenhauer reckons with the moment of mystery in religion and feels that it is necessary to the extent that it can serve as an indispensable aid to the average understanding of the masses in its dealings with the metaphysical reality. "It seems to me that it was in this spirit that Augustine and even Luther adhered to the mysteries of Christianity in opposition to Pelagianism which sought to explain everything to the dull level of comprehensibility."

Schopenhauer seeks the justification of religion in the faith that inspires the pious and breathes a new life into his consciousness. The religious value is abiding and eternal. Religious truths require no reasoning. The religious experience which is mystic and intuitionist, and which goes into the formation of the religious dogma allows no access into reasoning and logic. The element of faith is an integral part of all religions. The Buddhist emphasis on faith is typical.

"Faith is the guide, the womb, the guardian the begetter the cherisher of all virtues.

Expelling lust, bridging the stream, faith shows to us the city of Bliss.

Faith is the calm of pure thought: rooted in honour freed from Pride.

Faith is the foot on which we go to find great treasure, the hand with which we grasp happiness.

Faith gives gladness even in self-denial.

Faith gives delight, in the Law of the victory.

Faith gives the pre-eminence in knowledge of virtue: it guides and crowns the Buddha with victory.

Faith is a power unto keenness and clearness of morality keeping the five great qualities from extinction.

Unconquerable by passion, Faith, seeks out the noble tracts of Buddhahood.

Unattached to carnal joys, delivered from evil Faith is the truest and only joy.

Faith goes beyond the realm of Mara, and reveals the way to Deliverance.

Faith is the seed and root of virtues, Faith nourishes



the tree of wisdom. Faith increases the joys of knowledge.

Faith it is which reveals the victorious ones. They who put faith in Buddha leave not the way of virtue.....They who put faith in the Dharma thirst after the knowledge of the victorious ones, and aspire to their incomparable traits.....They who put Faith in Sangha.....will never fall from the strength of the true way.”<sup>4</sup>

—Ratnalka Dharani (After Bendall and Rouse)

The significance of Schopenhauer's philosophy of religion cannot be ignored. His philosophy is irrationalistic and pessimistic. The truth of life is rooted in the metaphysical will. The ultimate manifests in man as the will-to-live, the universal ground and sustainer of all that is. As an antidote to the pessimistic doctrine of the will-to-live, religion asserts its value. The aim of religion is to guide man in transcending the blind urge of the will-to-live. Religion serves a practical purpose. Religion gives a serviceable substitute of truth for the masses.<sup>5</sup> Schopenhauer was fully conscious of the pessimistic consequences of his philosophical principles and for this reason he introduces religion as a boon to escape the pessimism born of his metaphysical will. He essays to tone down the rigour of his pessimistic outlook with the help of religious visions and intuitions which we find in the sacred books of all religions and in the lives of the great seers of the past. Schopenhauer believed that the essence of all religions is to guide man to overcome the brute force of life and to go beyond what he finds in himself as a blind urge to the realms of ideal archetypes. He makes a bid to seek a way out of the pessimistic maze of his thought with the torch of religion. He spares no pains to defend religion as the most potent power to deliver man from the restless cravings of life.

Religion is a necessity for mankind. While philosophical and theoretical approach is hardly possible for the majority of mankind, religion helps to satisfy the indelible metaphysical need of humanity at large. It is not a tissue of lies or a fraud deliberately concocted to

deceive the masses. Schopenhauer thinks that it is natural for man to be religious rather than irreligious. Man is the highest grade of the objectification of the metaphysical will. Animals, plants and lifeless matter are all similar objectifications of the metaphysical will. But man alone has the privilege to have grown intellect and self-consciousness. He is a thinking animal. The element of suffering in man has reached its acme, thanks to his intellect, reason and self-consciousness. But the struggle of man to overcome the blind urge of the will-to-live has produced results. And Schopenhauer says that: "We have consequently no ground for assuming that a still more highly developed objectification of the will is ever reached, anywhere; for it has already reached its turning point here."<sup>6</sup> The will seems to have reached a stage of development in man where it is bound to take a new turn and deny its blind upsurge. A self-conscious creature that is a product of the will could hardly tolerate the irrational dynamic surge of the metaphysical will. The will stands on the crossway in man. And man marks out a turning-point in the series of the objectification of the will. While in man the will has taken a decisive turn, it is left to man to realise this truth and deny the will-to-live. If the denial of the will-to-live is to mean anything the practice of positive virtues should follow. Schopenhauer had in mind the ethical idea. He associated himself with the moral principles as enunciated by the great teachers of history.

It is only in religion and ethics that Schopenhauer sees the possibility of the total denial of the will to-live. Man could not escape his privileged duty of denying the will-to-live. The suffering fate and misfortunes which lie in ambush take him by surprise. They force man to tread willy nilly the path of religion and light and save himself from the darkness in which the irrational will-to-live engulfs him. Schopenhauer thinks that he is not alone, but only one among the many who have felt the need of religion and moral actions of men. "Philosophers on their side have at all times endeavoured to attain clear comprehension of the thing and notwithstanding their diffe-

rences in other respects, all, excepting the strictly materialistic philosophical systems, agree in this one point: that what is most important, nay alone essential, in our whole existence, that on which everything depends the real meaning, pivot or point (*sit venia verbo*) of it, lies in the morality of human actions."<sup>7</sup>

For Schopenhauer every religion, no matter what its historical place may be, performs the same function. The idea lying behind as the driving force is to realise the spiritual truths embodied in all religions. One should naturally get full consolation and help from religion and also extend love and tolerance to followers of other faiths. Religion is a guide to man and a beacon-light to the spiritual wayfarer. For Schopenhauer, religion with "its furtherance of good and kindly feelings, its guidance in conduct, the support and consolation it gives to suffering humanity in life and death"<sup>8</sup> helps a man in the truest way possible in overcoming the will-to-live. By moulding his character, religion infuses in man the spirit of nobility, respect for his fellow beings, and a benevolent feeling for all. Religion tones up the feeling for the ideal and quenches the baser desires which run counter to the dignity of man. Religion has two faces—one sullen and the other friendly. In following the friendly and helping phase of religion, man reaps a rich harvest. He overcomes his innate evil tendencies and the blind will-to-live. He learns the efficacy of moral truths and attempts to act according to them. Man will have to realise that in religion only he can think of sublimating his baser desires to mount up to a higher plane of existence. Here alone he will realise the real joy of peace and beatitude. Even an ordinary man who has no philosophical knowledge and who lacks the intellectual capacity of viewing life and existence objectively can aspire to conquer the uncontrollable urges which lead one to moral impurity. Until a man denies the will-to-live and comes out of its tentacles, Schopenhauer sees no hope of salvation. Salvation is a condition which can be enjoyed only after the complete victory over the will-to-live. Blindly clinging to life does not help man on his way to the ultimate truth.

But renouncing the worldly attachments of honour and riches and physical comforts man may well hope to attain peace and salvation. For a man who is neither a philosopher nor a genius, neither an artist nor a mystic, compliance with religion makes possible his salvation.

The purpose which Schopenhauer assigns to religion is to bring about a radical transformation in the nature of man. Desires crop up, debase his nature and strike their roots in his heart and mind. When they go down deeper into the subconscious, man becomes a slave of passions and desires. He sees that only in the satisfaction of his passions his own good lies. Man is an enemy unto his own brother. When his own interest is at stake he is upto any mischief. Schopenhauer distrusts man and thinks that until transformation is brought about in his nature by religion, and ethics, he will remain an untamed brute. The purpose of religion is to shape a new man out of the old. "Man is a hypocrite of the most consummate type. Even his sympathy is not always free from allay. Sometimes it is even a poisoned arrow, wherewith he attacks all the more effectively him whom he cannot, or perhaps will not, openly assail. Nay, oft-times his sympathy with one is but criticism of another."<sup>9</sup>

Schopenhauer calls the Sufis as the Gnostics of Islam.<sup>10</sup> He had great respect for the Sufis in whose religious and mystic writings he found a help and guide for the suffering man. Gnosis of God (Marifat Allah) is of two kinds: "Cognitional (ilmi) and emotional (hali)."<sup>11</sup> To know God is to attain great power and blessing. God who is omnipotent and omnipresent created the genii and mankind to serve him (Koran, li, 56). But only the few who are pure of heart enjoy his intimacy. "The greater part of men neglect this duty, except those whom God hath chosen and whose heart he hath vivified with himself. Gnosis is the life of the heart through God, and the turning away of one's inmost thoughts from all that is not God."<sup>12</sup>

Without going deep into the inner characteristics of the Sufi outlook on life, Schopenhauer accepts that the Gnostics of Islam also led the way to salvation.



Strangely enough, the philosopher who accepts the necessity of intellect and reason to know the reality of the problem of human existence and its accompanying misery, sees no intelligence behind the creation of the world and man. Schopenhauer had definite conception of religion in mind when he held that it is liberating force for the mankind. What Schopenhauer admires in religion is the fact of its effective control of obnoxious and evil tendencies in man. This is only possible after the complete denial of the will-to-live. Schopenhauer looks to the distant East, to India and its faiths for guidance in overcoming the will-to-live. Religion is an emancipatory force, let it be of a mystic, or of a Buddhist, or of a Vedantist, only when it is strong enough to subdue the burning passion of sex and the attachment for worldly goods. And Schopenhauer has unstinted praise for this religious experience of values. One who finds peace and salvation in mystic intuitions and visions, or in prayers addressed to God, is naturally led on a path of self-denial. Liberated indeed he is from all those bonds of worldly attachments which always come in the way of the seer and the saint.

The religious consciousness of Schopenhauer is very comprehensive but it lacks the religious fervour and faith in the Absolute Good, the distinctive hallmark of the religious attitude. But Schopenhauer did not mean to create a new religion but to base his theory on the empirical religious life. What is of great moment for Schopenhauer is the problem that confronts thought in the face of a will ~~which is evil and which is the ground of all that is, and~~ which in man has reached its highest objectification. But supreme irrationality has given birth to intellect and reason! These two ~~emergent qualities of man~~ stand against ~~the~~ metaphysical will. Schopenhauer has strange confidence in the power of the intellect to work a miracle, to deny its own ground and source and effect a way out. It is really curious to note the rationalistic strain in the irrational metaphysics of Schopenhauer. Now intellect seems all powerful, powerful enough to challenge with success the hitherto undisputed supremacy of the will. Only man can overcome the fundamental error in the absolute rea-



lity. In the cultivation of moral and ethical values, and in the experience of the holy, Schopenhauer found the preparations for the ultimate deliverance. In art, we can lift ourselves above the "desire and struggle for existence." "So long as consciousness is dominated by the will, the individual is the prey of thronging desires and can know no peace or happiness; but when he rises above his personal interests and contemplates purely objectively, disinterestedly, apart from its relation to his own will or to other things, he enjoys 'the Sabbath of the penal servitude of willing; the wheel of Ixion stands still' "<sup>13</sup>—This path lies in artistic contemplation. The second path which leads man to salvation is that of asceticism and religion. This path can accord permanent salvation to the individual.

Schopenhauer believed that religion can free man from the clutches of the will. For Schopenhauer, the aim of religion is not realisation of God by man, but the denial of the will-to-live. In fact, religion has both these aims. The realisation of God is not possible unless man is cleansed of the baser elements which come in his way to spiritual advancement and rob him of love and sympathy for his own kind. The religious quest is the quest of God. It is the consciousness that God is omnipresent and answers man's call in trouble and misery, and in moments when he looks to him for guidance.

"In the market, in the cloister——only God I saw.  
In the valley and on the mountain..... only God I saw.

Him I have seen beside me oft in tribulation;  
~~In favour and in fortune..... only God I saw.~~

In prayer and fasting, in praise and contemplation.  
In the religion of the Prophet——only God I saw.  
Neither soul nor body, accident nor substance,  
Qualities or causes——only God I saw.

I opened my eyes and by the light of His face  
around me.

In all the eye discovered——only God I saw.  
Like a candle I was melting in his fire :

Amidst the flames outflashing—only God I saw.  
 Myself with mine own eyes I saw most clearly,  
 But when I looked with God's eyes—only God  
 I saw.

I passed away into, I vanished,  
 And lo, I was All-living—only God I saw."<sup>14</sup>

—Baba Kuhi of Shiraz

Religion works as a penance for human ills. On the path of pain man realises the worth that is in life. If we are to believe Schopenhauer, it is the phenomenon of suffering and pain that makes religion first possible. Religions are carried by the conviction that an element of suffering and pain is necessary to man for God-realisation. His realisation is really a return to source and origin. Schopenhauer makes suffering itself the quintessence of the absolute reality and only through knowledge vouchsafed in religion and through intellect and reason that the absolute evil could be denied. Religion views suffering and pain as compensatory factors. They have their own significance. As The Proverbs say;

"My son, despise not the chastening of the Lord;  
 Neither be weary of his reproof;  
 For whom the Lord loveth;

Even as a father the son in whom he delighteth."

Suffering is not in vain, and man is tried by it in life. Schopenhauer is in complete accord with the mystic and religious teachers who believe in the retributory value of suffering in life.

Many a mystic has seen the danger which seizes a wise man in his contact with the charms of life. They intoxicate him and lure him to his undoing. But the sage is he who, as the Stoics think, remains unconcerned with the fleeting joys of life. It is here that ethical and moral maxims come to bear fruit. In such a predicament, the religious consciousness stands him in good stead. The idea of sex in Schopenhauer's philosophy is narrow in the extreme. In the Upanishads it is freely recognised that the sex energy may be diverted into higher channels and become a source of strength to the spiritual way-farer. The power of Brahmacharya or

the control of the sexual passion has been taken as necessary for an aspirant for higher life and for the seeker of God. The problem of sex could not have been ignored by religion and indeed every religion has devised rules for the guidance of sexual life of man and woman. Schopenhauer while recognising the value of all religions in man's conquest of the will-to-live has totally neglected the power of sex in man and stigmatised it as evil. Obsessed as he was with the idea of sex as an immediate manifestation of will Schopenhauer has brought unfortunate confusion in the problem of sex and has willfully distorted the facts.

It is the call of religion that pursues man in spite of himself and leads to salvation. Our sensibility to the call of religion is a sign of spiritual advancement. It is the creative urge of self to unite with the infinite. So long as the self is linked with the body and lost amidst the cry of daily needs and necessities it remains in darkness and ignorance. When it realises that its true mission lies in its union with the eternal it attains bliss. Only after the fuller awakening of the slumbering self that a man can hope to amend his life and foresee a blissful future and existence. A great Muslim Sufi and philosopher has described this struggle in classical terms. This man is no other than Al Ghazzali. He says:

"On the one side the world kept me bound to my post in the chains of covetousness, on the other side the voice of religion cried to me, "Up! Up! thy life is nearing its end, and thou hast a long journey to make. All thy pretended knowledge is naught but falsehood and fantasy. If thou dost not think now of thy salvation, when will thou think of it? If thou dost not break thy chains today, when will thou break them?"<sup>15</sup>

Schopenhauer's emphasis on the necessity of religion reveals the part which it is destined to play in the life of man. Religion's role is not exhausted in its capacity to act as a guide and teacher but as a force that works for bliss in human life. Only religion can provide man with sufficient moral strength to defeat the

evil, and only religion can inculcate in man moral values.

The tragic situation of life cannot be transcended if it is left to itself. Religion introduces a new moment, and as Schopenhauer has rightly seen, it does not stand on a par with art. What is gained for a few fleeting moments in art is assured permanence by religion. Without religion "our soul is bowed down to the dust" and we are "like the beasts that perish."

## CHAPTER IV

### SALVATION : A PROBLEM

So curse I all, around the soul that windeth  
Its magic and alluring spell,  
And with delusive flattery bindeth  
Its victim to this dreary cell !  
Curs'd before all things be the high opinion,  
Wherewith the spirit girds itself around !  
Of shows delusive curs'd be the dominion,  
Within whose mocking sphere our sense is bound !  
Accurs'd of dreams the treacherous wiles,  
The cheat of glory, deathless fame !  
Accurs'd what each as property beguiles,  
Wife, child, slave, plough, whate'er its name !<sup>1</sup>

—Goethe : Faust

The Will is supreme for Schopenhauer. The absolute Will has no concern for man. Man has to overcome the irrational and instinctive urges in him which reflect the nature of the Will. Man is a product of the Will. Therefore salvation emerges as a fundamental problem in the philosophy of Schopenhauer.

Man is only a phenomenon. The absolute will is omnipotent and omnipresent. Only the will enjoys full freedom. Schopenhauer contends that man being a phenomenon of the will enjoys no free-will. What is phe-



nomenal cannot be free and must necessarily depend on the original principle for its existence. But the pessimism of Schopenhauer loses its rigour when he expresses the hope that even the dependent phenomenon can soar to the heights of freedom and redemption. The dependence of man on the absolute will ends when man treads the path of holiness and self-renunciation. The tragedy implicit in the metaphysical stand-point of the will gets resolved in the fold of religion and in the pursuit of moral and religious ideals. The will is the thing-in-itself, and so naturally it is "the content of all phenomena."<sup>2</sup> The contention that the phenomenon is dependent on the will is due to the fact that it is governed by the principle of sufficient reason. Schopenhauer says that the phenomenal is "subordinate to the principle of sufficient reason in its four forms."<sup>3</sup> Hence, the inherent freedom of the thing-in-itself cannot be man's as a phenomenon. A man might well enjoy the freedom of the thing-in-itself even in life. Schopenhauer sees every kind of possibility in reaching this state of existence. The condition that follows in one's deliverance from the tyranny of the will is salvation. Salvation comes about when man has negated the driving forces of the will in his nature. When the surge of blind impulses ceases and the reign of cool and calm contemplation of the Ideas sets in, the will is submerged and man becomes capable of enjoying the bliss of salvation. But freedom and salvation do also come through the way of religion and ethics. The "phenomena of holiness and self-renunciation"<sup>4</sup> bring to man the message of salvation and freedom.

Man has self-consciousness. He has intellect. But the intellect "belongs to the phenomenon, which has the principium individuationis as its form."<sup>5</sup> Man's moral actions spring from the fact of "numerical identity of the inner nature of all living beings."<sup>6</sup> The following of the holy path of religion also confirms this fact. Religion essentially aims at liberating a man from the tyranny of the will, and Schopenhauer notes that all the religions of the world have the same goal. The basic elements

common to Christianity, Brahmanism and Buddhism, lies in the doctrine of salvation. "The great fundamental truth, then, which is contained in Christianity, as in Brahmanism and Buddhism, the need of deliverance from an existence which is given up to suffering and death, and the attainableness of this by the denial of the will, thus by a decided opposition to nature, is beyond all comparison the most important truth there can be; but, at the same time, it is entirely opposed to the natural tendency of the human race, and in its true grounds it is difficult to comprehend; as indeed all that can only be thought generally and in the abstract is inaccessible to the great majority of men."<sup>7</sup>

Man is in need of salvation but unfortunately the religious message of redemption has not been understood. Schopenhauer bewails this fact of ignorance on the part of the majority of mankind.

The world is a place of struggle and suffering. But in struggle and suffering lies hidden the secret of salvation. The purgatory of suffering only can cleanse the evil of instincts in man. And it must be remembered that infinite suffering and pain has to be borne by man if he is earnest enough to purge his life of the last blots of sin. In answer to the question of King Milindar, the Buddhist logician and scholar, Nagasena declares that a man would take birth thousands of times and undergo thousands of years of existence, in different shapes, until the last clod of Karma is burnt away. Only then that man can obtain complete Nirvana. But what will be the nature of Nirvana when the Karmas clinging to the individual are exhausted? Nagasena answers that a man who has exhausted his Karmas will be a man who is no more moved either by pleasure or pain and who is beyond the cycles of rebirth. Nagasena clarifies the nature of Nirvana in the description of the wise man blessed with the enjoyment of Nirvana. Such wise man, says Nagasena, "neither takes pleasure in those things, nor finds delight in them, nor continues cleaving to them. And inasmuch as he does not, his craving ceases, and by the cessation of craving grasping

ceases, and by the cessation of grasping becoming ceases, and when becoming has ceased birth ceases, and with its cessation old age, and death, grief lamentation pain, sorrow and despair cease to exist. Thus is the cessation brought about the end of all that aggregation of pain. Thus, is it that cessation is Nirvana."<sup>8</sup> Schopenhauer echoes the spirit of Nagasena's words that freedom from clinging attachment to life is salvation. The gain of final salvation is a life of harmony and peace and cessation of all future births. Life gives an opportunity to attain salvation, but existence is itself not a sin with Buddhists. But, for Schopenhauer, existence itself is a blunder and return from existence is salvation. With his acceptance of the will as an essentially blind and unplanned activity, the spirit of his speculation comes in conflict with the Buddhist ideal of salvation. But within certain limitations, he looks typically Buddhist, as for when he emphasises the fact that "existence is certainly to be regarded as an erring, to return from which is salvation."<sup>9</sup>

The self of man has two aspects, the one is destructible and the other is indestructible. The indestructible part of man is the real existent, and it never perishes. The phenomenon of man is due to the assemblage of destructible elements. When these are vanished man gains infinitude, and what remains is only the indestructible part of the self. The destructible parts of the self have been enumerated in Anugita as consisting of "The life-winds, the tongue, the mind, and (the quality of) goodness, together with (the quality of) passions, (these make up) the manifestation as individual entities."<sup>10</sup> The finitude or bondage of man is due to the assemblage of certain qualities, and when they are destroyed his release or emancipation follows.

Renunciation is not giving up of work and actions by man. The performance of actions should be without attachment and without any gain whatsoever. Abandonment of Karma is never tantamount to renunciation. It does not involve giving up of worship, charity, and austerity. But these are helpful in man's attempt to

become pure in soul and heart. Whatever may be the duty assigned to a person, it must be performed unconditionally. Bhagavadgita says that a man should aim at God in his mind and try to live to the noble ideals of truth. A life of self-control should be his and the blind surge of passions must be controlled by all means. Salvation and internal poise issue forth when a life of truth is led by the devotee. By loving God and his creatures a man can seek highest bliss and salvation. Only when his life and actions are dedicated to God, can he win Shanti and lasting salvation.

The problem of salvation has been seriously considered not only by academic philosopher but also by all seekers of truth. Ramanuja in his commentary on the Vedanta-Sutras has tried to tackle this problem. He considers the typical viewpoints bearing on the question as to what constitutes salvation or release. A school of thought holds that in the destruction of the consciousness of the self of man lies release and they affirm that consciousness is the only essential quality of the soul. Another school thinks that in the removal of avidya or nescience, true release is attained; others maintain that when self is freed of all knowledge and qualities and remains in a state of isolation, moksha or salvation follows. There is also a school of thought according to which the only reality is of the highest self and this is beyond the limitations and bondages. By realising the Supreme self, the problem of bondage and finitude of man could be solved. Without regard to the conflict of the schools Ramanuja is concerned to give his own view as to the nature and content of salvation. "There is a highest Brahman which is the sole cause of the entire universe, which is antagonistic to all evil, whose essential nature is infinite knowledge and blessedness which comprises within itself numberless auspicious qualities of supreme excellence, which is different in nature from all other beings and which constitutes the inner Self of all. Of this Brahman, the individual souls—whose true nature is unlimited knowledge, and whose only essential attribute is the intui-



tion of the supreme self—are modes, in so far, namely, as they constitute its body. The nature of these souls is, however obscured by nescience, i.e., the influence of beginningless chain of works; and by release then we have to understand that intuition of the highest Self, which is the natural state of the individual souls, and which follows on the destruction of Nescience—.”<sup>11</sup>

It is difficult indeed to understand fully what is exactly meant by emancipation. To describe the condition and the content of salvation is hard. Even Gautama Buddha was aware of this difficulty. Men would like to be satisfied intellectually before accepting anything. But what is experienced spiritually and grasped in intuition cannot be translated into words to satisfy logic and reason. Buddha after attaining enlightenment and Nirvana was confronted with the difficulty as to how to convey his message of Nirvana to people who are “given to desire, intent upon desire, delightening in desire.” How can they who are in the mesh of desires understand the significance of causality? Their mind could not grasp how the Samkharas could be got rid off, and that only with the elimination of all the substrata (of existence) quietitude of heart or Nirvana is possible. “Given to lust, surrounded with thick darkness, they will not see what is repugnant (to their minds) abstruse, profound, difficult to perceive and subtle.”<sup>12</sup> The nature of salvation is spiritual and that is the reason why one fails to understand it, save in following it faithfully. It would be naturally difficult to estimate the problem of salvation purely on logical and psychological grounds. What is required first and foremost by religion is the keen and unshaken desire on the part of the aspirant. In religion no particular mental and intellectual depth and profundity is called for to be blessed with salvation. And the emphasis is always placed rather on the need of salvation than on an actual insight into the nature of the salvation itself. That is why it is accepted that hard as it is to understand the doctrine of salvation it is easy to attain Nirvana itself.

The Buddhist description of the Nirvana in nega-



tive predicates has led some of the critics to assume that it is nothing but nothingness. Schopenhauer, while commenting on the Buddhist doctrine of Nirvana, declares: "If Nirvana is defined as nothing, this only means that the Sansara contains no single element which could assist the definition or construction of Nirvana."<sup>13</sup> How could the realisation of Nirvana amount to nothingness when salvation is reached by following the eightfold path and the cultivation of positive virtues? A proper perspective of the problem lies in understanding the fact that Nirvana or salvation embraces in its fold both positive and negative values. Nirvana or salvation might be called a negative state on the basis that it excludes vices, passions and any attachments to riches. It is positive because it represents the fulness of life in sympathy and compassion for the suffering humanity. Indeed, it is a state in which one lives up to the ideal of purest virtue. Schopenhauer has rightly appreciated the problem when he affirms that the sense of nothingness attached to Nirvana does not connote nothingness but only "negation of this world, or of Sansara."<sup>14</sup>

The emphasis on the world and Samsara as nothing is due to the fact that no happiness can be born out of it. It is a grave error to suppose that happiness is within reach in the world. Schopenhauer thinks that human existence is in itself an unhappy state and no positive good can be arrived at unless one takes into account this hard fact. "There is only one inborn error and that is that we live to be happy. It is inborn in us because it is one with our existence itself, and our whole being is only a paraphrase of it, nay, our body is its monogram. We are nothing more than will-to-live and the successive satisfaction of all our volitions is what we think in the conception of happiness."<sup>15</sup> This will-to-live and the inveterate error of trying to find happiness in the world ought to be overcome. The world and its contents signify nothing because they make man captive of his own desires and a lifelong slave of his passions. Never can he venture to break

the chains that bind him. And this error persists with the misery of existence. But the extinction of misery does not amount to the extinction of the individual. Otherwise, it would speak for a doctrine of self-annihilation and suicide, a doctrine which is often imputed to Schopenhauer by the critics. Schopenhauer meets hostile criticism on the one hand by the theory of salvation, a condition in which man completely negates the world and its objects and delivers himself from the tyranny of the will-to-live; on the other, by his bold assertion that salvation is not tantamount to self-effacement entirely. Only the will-to-live is negated but the self maintains itself, purged of its desires and passions, in a state of beatitude. All this is implicit in the teaching of Schopenhauer, though he has never succeeded in reconciling the seeming contradictions of his system. Salvation for Schopenhauer is the summum bonum of human life. No good and happiness can transcend the quietitude of salvation. Negation of the will is not negation of life. Only the ordeal of human experience and life can lead us to the gateway of happiness, certainly not the bare renunciation of life. Schopenhauer maintains that human body and life can be the receptacles of highest kind of knowledge, peace and happiness. In the words of Uberweg, "the negation of the will-to-live, appears when, as the result of the knowledge of life, volition ceases, various known individual phenomena no longer acting as motives to volition, but the whole knowledge of the essence of the world, which is required through the apprehension of the Ideas, and which is a mirror of the will, and becoming, a quietive of the will, and the will thus freely renouncing and annihilating it."<sup>16</sup>

It is clear that only in the apprehension of the Ideas the knowledge of reality dawns upon man, and only this knowledge redeems a person from the pain and suffering of life. But such knowledge comes not on a sudden. The true knowledge come seldom without struggle on the part of the aspirant. The sweet dream of salvation oft deludes a person with false hopes. But salva-

tion when it is realised by renunciation and toil redeems a person. Once we are aware of the will as "Tattwamasi," the spirit advances beyond the confines of Sattva, Rajas and Tamas. But abstract awareness as such leads man nowhere, unless he is ready to realise it by internal culture, discipline and Yoga. For this reason only, Schopenhauer has to take the help of religion and ethics which ensure man true salvation. Religion demands rigorous following of moral discipline and only the moral way of fellow feeling and sympathy can lift man. How knowledge in itself is unhelpful to man, is illustrated by a striking simile of Gautama, the Buddha. It is just like a man who has a precious diamond in his possession, but unaware of its value, he submits to hunger and thirst and cannot make use of what he has.<sup>17</sup>

Only when knowledge is integrated with life can it bear fruit and yield a rich harvest. Why man suffers after all? Swayed as he is by passions, he loses his way and drifts at large. Freedom can be ours when we have been awakened to the reality of our life and to the problem which beset us. Buddhists say that the substratum of life itself is rooted in impermanence. Things are mutable; they are bustling with life today, but pass away like shadows tomorrow. Only by transcending the limits of birth, life, change and decay and the confines of the mutable existence, man brings to an ultimate end the sufferings of life. On his way from the mutable to the immutable, from the shifting situations of life, to the lasting beatitude man encounters suffering and pain. His deliverance is brought about only when he becomes one with the moral order.

In the writings of Jaina saints we find that deliverance comes after perfection. "Without (right) faith there is no (right) knowledge, without (right) knowledge there is no virtuous conduct, without virtues there is no deliverance."<sup>18</sup> Deliverance or salvation comes to man after one has passed the moral path with faith in heart, and right knowledge in the girdle. The element of faith forms an integral part of religious

spirit. Schopenhauer has no little confidence in faith and in its efficacy in leading the masses towards God, perfection and salvation. Deprived of faith, no man can imbibe the religious spirit fully. Faith comes naturally to man and at times it is even stronger than reason.

Religions maintain that the reality which governs the world and man is the primal infinite power or being. This being is all in all. It is *ens realissimum*. Man is a part of the absolute. The individual remains finite and in bondage unless the relation with the infinite power comes to his rescue. To become one with the infinite is to transcend the limitations of the body and thus attain freedom from pain and bondage. "Having become united with him (through constant meditation), he obtains final liberation."<sup>19</sup> It is through meditation and *dhayana* that *Purusha* can be realised. *Purusha* or *Vishnu* is beyond the cognisance of the senses. No attachments can describe him. Being the absolute reality, it pervades all the universe and also supports it.

Salvation is the concern of the individual. But salvation comes not by any haphazard effort on the part of the individual, however persistent it may be. As we have already pointed out, the principle of sufficient reason does all the mischief and hence our philosopher is at pains to show that unless man transcends the limitations imposed on him by this principle, deliverance will certainly elude him and he will remain what he is a slave of passion and desires and groaning like any other animal. The difference between him and lower orders of existence cannot be established and maintained if he has not the power of insight to break through the confines of the principle of sufficient reason, and win for himself a privileged place in reality. It is man alone who sees through the game and attain the bliss of salvation. However, the mind of man is limited in its power and effort. It cannot always bring peace and freedom from pain. Yet sufferings are not futile. They bring salvation nearer. Sufferings no doubt make a hell of life but they make possible the realisation of



salvation." "I have presented suffering as to a certain extent a substitute for virtue and holiness; but I must make the bold assertion that, taking everything into consideration, we have message of hope for our salvation and deliverance from what we suffer than from what we do."<sup>20</sup>

The different views of salvation speak for difference in temperament. It is a fact that men differ in their individual capacity. Even all the faculties of man are not equally developed. One is a man of intelligence; another is a man of action. This typological difference in the constitutional makeup of man was duly recognised by the sages of Upanishads and by seers of all nations down the ages. Hence, the approach to the problem of human destination cannot be one. But all paths necessarily lead to the same goal. The views of salvation are not in real antagonism with one other. They really refer to the variety of paths which lead to truth and liberation. The view-points of liberation and salvation have a wide range. One of them insists on the concentration on the syllable Om, which helps to realise the eternal absolute. That the intellect of man plays an important role in the attainment of liberation, and one who is devoid of intellect could not aspire to salvation, represents another viewpoint. But besides other necessary conditions what is absolutely indispensable is the burning desire for salvation in human heart, says Jalaluddin Rumi, the great mystic of the East; "Seek water less and only let you grow your thirst for water. Water will then flow from above and from below!" When the desire is at hand man can safely get liberation through any path.

Salvation frees a man from the veil of Maya and the delusion created in him by the principium individuationis. As phenomenon he is not distinguished from the phenomena of the will. The erroneous notion of independent individuality keeps man held in illusion. "The sight of the uncultivated individual is clouded, as the Hindus say, by the veil of Maya. He sees not the thing-in-itself but the phenomena in time and space, the pri-



ncipium individuationis, and in the other forms of the principle of sufficient reason. And in this form of his limited knowledge, he sees not the inner nature of things, which are one, but its phenomena as separated, disunited, innumerable, very different, and indeed opposed. For, to him, pleasure appears as one thing and pain as quite another thing. One man as a tormenter and a murderer, another as a martyr and a victim; wickedness as one thing and evil as another."<sup>21</sup>

It is in the realisation of the unity of the metaphysical reality and man that a way could be found to salvation. Unless this all-important fact is understood, it is not possible to think of salvation at all. But the thought of the indivisibleness of the absolute reality and man and the dependence of man on the absolutely real, is not a discovery of Schopenhauer. It is as old as the Upanishads. In the East, especially in India, it was thought that salvation is arrived at only after the realisation of the identity of the individual with Brahman. In the Upanishads which are the source books of Indian philosophy and religion, we often come across this idea. In them, we find many passages dealing with the problem of salvation. For an ardent aspirant, the Upanishads have prescribed many ways of salvation. And most important of them is the way of realisation of the identity of the individual and the Absolute Brahman. The appearance of the relative universe vanishes for a man who has gained this insight. When this state is won there is no birth again on the earth. Man has become one with the Brahman. In the knowledge of the Supreme One man becomes like Him. Neither race and sex, nor colour has to do anything with the realisation of the unity of individual soul with Brahman. Real thirst and ardent desire for realisation dawn on man only when he has become disgusted with the factors of life, attachments and desires. When one realises that at the base of the transitory world all is false and illusory he from that moment onwards moves to the final goal. Thus man comes to launch the life and death struggle for liberation from bondage. He aims at a

state which is free from attachments and bondage, death and birth.

That identification with God or the absolute reality leads to salvation has found expression in Bhagavad-gita, where Lord Krishna declares: "Constantly devoting his self to abstraction, a devotee, whose mind is restrained, attains that tranquillity which culminates in final emancipation and assimilation with me."<sup>22</sup> The aim of salvation now becomes the highest goal of man.<sup>23</sup> Man's release or salvation the highest aim of life could be obtained by assimilation of the knowledge of Vedanta and meditation on the nature of Brahman.<sup>24</sup> With salvation within his reach, it is believed that a man can escape death and rebirth.<sup>25</sup> The same standpoint is maintained in Jaina Sutras also. "He for whom there is no bondage whatever in this world and besides in the two (other continents, or heaven and hell), is indeed a (monk needing) no support and no standing place, he has quitted the path of births."<sup>26</sup> Good conduct as such is no guarantee to real freedom and no more laudable than the devotion of one who is released and has attained salvation; "the devotee who is released is esteemed higher than these."<sup>27</sup> (i.e., men of good conduct). Thus, salvation is a condition par-excellence than any good. Emancipation or salvation has been described as one among the four Hotris (priests): "The instrument, the action, the agent and emancipation, these indeed O, you of a (pure) heart are the four Hotris by whom this universe is enveloped."<sup>28</sup>

Not in becoming one with the will but freeing oneself from the will, salvation comes to man. There is no idea of unity with the Brahman and the consequent enjoyment of bliss finds no place in Schopenhauer. It is to be noted that Schopenhauer falls back on the spirit of religion and morality to find a refuge from the difficulties of his metaphysics.

Schopenhauer stands for self-culture and resignation. The stronger a man's attachments are with the world, the more he is isolated from his goal. Moksa or Salvation is a state of perfection. It reminds us of San-

karacharya's vision of salvation. Sankara quotes Upanishads for a confirmation of his view of Moksa as eternal and free from all modifications. Moksa "is eternal in the true sense, i.e., eternal without undergoing any changes (Kutasthanitya), omnipresent as ether, free from all modifications, absolutely self-sufficient, not composed of part of self-luminous nature. That bodiless entity in fact, to which merit and demerit with their consequences and threefold time do not apply is called release, a definition agreeing with scriptural passages, such as the following: 'Different from merit and demerit, from effect and cause, different from past and future' (Ka. Upanishad I, 2, 14)."<sup>29</sup> For Sankara, Moksa or Salvation shares the characteristics of the Brahman, who is eternal and unchangeable; "if Brahman were represented as supplementary to certain actions, and release were assumed to be the effect of those actions, it would be non-eternal, and would have to be considered merely as something holding a pre-eminent position among the described non-eternal fruits of actions with their various degrees. But that release in something eternal is acknowledged by whoever admits it at all, and the teaching concerning Brahman can therefore not be merely supplementary to actions."<sup>30</sup>

Sankara's view is apparently more consistent than Schopenhauer's. If salvation is the goal of life, then such end could not be other than the return to the original state. The greatest and the noblest ideal which is cherished by man is that of return to the original source, whence he has come. The inner spirit of man speaks out that it is not different from the Absolute Self. As the Holy Qur'an says: "From Allah we come and unto Allah we return." Until the final return with the absolute remains unrealised, man is tormented by fear, hatred, doubt and sorrow. Deliverance comes only when man tries to transcend his finitude and thinks that he is a part of the absolute. Man is intimately related with the supreme self, and he suffers only because of his identification of his self with the gross body. As long as this false attitude is not negated,

there could be no deliverance from pain, and suffering continues to haunt human existence. Only when this knowledge dawns that nothing exists in reality except the absolute self that true emancipation can follow. In the state of salvation there is total absence of the feeling of separateness. With the return to the original source, and with the awareness of one's proximity with the infinite, the soul of man experiences ecstasy in close communion.

Schopenhauer has constantly in mind his single metaphysical reality of the will and its omnipresent nature in his system of salvation. The inconsistency involved in the irrationality of the absolute will again proves a hurdle to an understanding of his conception of salvation. Contrary to the view of Vedanta, Schopenhauer's conception of salvation looks colourless. Not in the assimilation with the absolute reality, but in gaining separation from it, that real freedom and salvation come to man. The idea that all comprehending and pervasive reality is spiritual and blissful is absent in Schopenhauer. The problem of salvation is the only consistent and redeeming feature in the philosophy of Schopenhauer, but unfortunately it belies the spirit of his irrationalism. The problem of salvation brings a new moment in Schopenhauer's scheme of things and on a sudden we find the gloom of pessimism admitting a ray of light. What he tries to demolish with one hand, he constructs with another. The influence of the scriptures of the East and the West has contributed to rob his pessimism of its own shadows. He raises a metaphysical edifice on the principle of the irrational will, but he realises soon that man could not remain within the confines of pessimism for long. The spirit of man speaks of something infinite and sublime which cannot be denied. The Upanishads above all have left an indelible influence on the philosophy of Schopenhauer. Never could he shake off the hypnotic hold of these sacred texts. His principle of the will is not in itself adequate to make his conception of salvation intelligible.



Copleston has critically assessed Schopenhauer's view of salvation in its relation to similar views in Christianity and Vedanta. "The Christian Faith directs the attention of man to the Beatific Vision of God, the philosophy of Vedanta (or one form of it at least) to reabsorption into the Absolute, the philosophy of Plotinus to union with the one; but Schopenhauer holds out as the highest and the final goal, not union with God and retention of individuality, not even unconscious identity with will, but absolute nothingness."<sup>31</sup>

It is true that there is no notion of divine bliss or absorption in God in Schopenhauer's thought. He could not speak of an identification of man with the will as it would, according to him, be tantamount to damnation rather than salvation. But at the same time salvation is neither a state of nothingness nor does it lead towards nothingness. If at all Schopenhauer's conception of salvation teaches only nothingness, there is no reason why it cannot be interpreted as a return to the bosom of the will? If it is taken that return to the will is akin to nothingness then the will itself would be nothing other than nothingness. But obviously even in the spirit of Schopenhauer's philosophy the will is not a pure negation but a positive reality. As the reality of Schopenhauer is dynamic, there always remains a possibility of its taking shapes and qualities which are other than what it originally possessed. In the mystical flights of Jacob Boheme and in one of the phases of Shelling's philosophy, this possibility is taken into account. Out of the abyss of the primitive irrationality, the rational good emerges. Man, for example, is a phenomenon of the will. But man has a strange power to visualise the Ideas in contemplation. Man is led to the salvation through contemplation of ideas. In him now the irrationality of the ultimate has submitted itself to a new transformation and has indeed admitted a defeat. In the words of Caldwell: "The salvation of the world consists for Schopenhauer in the fact that we can see the Ideas. But seeing that the distinction between the subject and the object is said to 'vanish'



in the "contemplation of Ideas," we say that Schopenhauer makes out the salvation of the world to consist in the fact that the will can contemplate itself in the Ideas."<sup>32</sup>

The phenomenon is of course governed by the principle of sufficient reason with its four forms. But in the apprehension of the Ideas, a man transcends the hold of principle of sufficient reason. Ideas are free and are not subject to the condition of time and space. They are above mutation and are not created. "The Ideas are the stages of the objectification of the will, imperfectly expressed in numberless individuals, they exist as the unequalled patterns of the latter or as the eternal forms of things, not extending themselves into space and time, which are media of individual things, but immovable, unchangeable, ever existent, and uncreated while individual things rise into being and decay, are ever becoming, but never are."<sup>33</sup> Schopenhauer sees that only in the apprehension of the Ideas that one can get out of the prison-house of existence and the world. The sway of the will on man ends here. Man remains no more a finite being bound to the principle of causality and limited by time and space but gains freedom infinite and enjoys the bliss of salvation.

The function of the Ideas is to act as *via media* between the will and the individual. "In individual things, as they appear to us in time and space, and conformally to the principle of sufficient reason, the thing-in-itself, or the will becomes only mediately objective, between the will and the individual object stands the Idea, as that in which alone the will is immediately objective."<sup>34</sup> Man in his intuition of the Idea becomes one with it. Each organism or object has its corresponding Idea. They are its images. But what holds man from realising the Idea? Schopenhauer thinks that organism has to overcome the forces of nature which are also objectifications of the will, though on a lower level. Uberweg interprets this as follows: "Each organism represents the Idea of which it is an image, only with such decrement of force as is

involved in the overcoming of the inferior Ideas which disputes its matter. According as the organism succeeds in overcoming these forces of nature which express inferior stages in the objectification of the will, it becomes more or less perfect expression of its Idea, i.e., it stands nearer to or further from the ideal of beauty in its species."<sup>35</sup>

For Schopenhauer perfection lies in the fuller expression of the Idea of which the human race is the image. Our expression of the Idea in life and the extent of its influence are determining factors of perfection. Beauty, Goodness and Character subsist in the true expression of the Idea. In fuller realisation of the Idea and in one's own absorption in the Idea, man originally an image of the Idea, attains salvation. But this view of Ideas as existing beyond space and time and yet existing 'objectively and spatially in organisms' has been rightly criticised by Uberweg as beyond intellectual comprehension.

The reality is one, says Schopenhauer. The division of reality into Ideas should not be misunderstood. Ideas in their multiplicity has one common origin. The dynamic will has varied expressions, and it objectifies itself on different levels. The will is no doubt one but it can be viewed as manifold. "A tree considered itself is one, but it is manifold if viewed as having branches; so the sea itself is one, but manifold as having waves and foam; so the clay in itself is one, but manifold if viewed with regard to the jars and dishes made of it."<sup>36</sup> The sense of the unity of the absolute reality comes through right knowledge. Even for Schopenhauer, the apprehension of the Idea is possible only when man has the rare power of contemplation. Schopenhauer sees in the genius this mysterious power in a developed form.

Man is the image of the Idea. Man as an image of the Idea could not proclaim himself as detached from the Idea. For how can an image differ from its own origin? But the difference lies in the awakening of the potentialities dormant in it. A seed has also potentialities and it becomes a tree as it grows. Until growth

takes place, the potentialities remain latent. Hence, the realisation of the Idea could not end with its contemplation but in the unfoldment of its nature and qualities in man.

The contemplation of the Idea by the dependent phenomenon, i.e., man leads towards salvation. But it is not contemplation only that predisposes man to salvation. Man has a second alternative also. This lies through the path of holiness and self-renunciation. This is the path of religion and ethics. "Schopenhauer finds in art an escape from the theoretical and practical bondage under which we live."<sup>37</sup>

Schopenhauer's thought has great affinity with the Indian philosophy in its attitude to world and man. He praises the path of truth and salvation worked out by the Indian philosophers. He finds singular pleasure when he sees his views corroborated in Buddhism and other system of Eastern thought. "Schopenhauer sympathises with the Hindu penitents, with the Buddhist doctrine of termination of suffering by exit from the checkered world of life (Samsara) and entering into unconsciousness (Nirvana), and with the ascetic elements in Christianity."<sup>38</sup> Uberweg has accepted the affinity of thought between Schopenhauer and Indian philosophy but he fails to see how Schopenhauer can sustain his theory of salvation on the basis of his ethics. He says: "His senile ethics knows no positive aim for the sake of which the renunciation and destruction of whatever is inferior is a moral duty."<sup>39</sup> But it must be remembered that Schopenhauer has evoked the help of religion and thereby has given a firm foundation to his ethical Ideas. Uberweg suggests a way to clear away this ambiguity in Schopenhauer's ethics. He does not find it fruitful to bring will and intellect in a relation of the type which Schopenhauer has in mind.

Schopenhauer sees human life in three extremes. These three correspond to the division of Rajas, Sattva and Tamas. The difference in the psychological make-up of man makes him incline to accept a definite view. But all the qualities of Rajas, Tamas and Sattva show

the stages of will's variegated expression. The following of religious path and a life of piety or even the quest for temporary peace in the realm of art through the apprehension of Ideas are determined by Schopenhauer with reference to the presence of the qualities of Rajas, Tamas and Sattva in man. "First the powerful will, the strong passions (Radscha-guna). It appears in great historical characters; it is described in the epic and the drama. But it can also show itself in the little world, for the size of the objects is measured here by the degrees in which they influence the will, not according to their external relations. Secondly, pure knowing, the comprehension of the Ideas, conditioned by the freeing of knowledge from the service of will, the life of genius (Satwa-guna). Thirdly and lastly, the greatest knowledge attaching to it, empty longing, life benumbing languor (Tama-guna)."<sup>40</sup> Thus, the earnest thinker of the West had to avail himself of the rich heritage of the East for support and sanction of his own thought.

## CHAPTER V

# SALVATION : ITS CONDITIONS

Peace ; come away : the song of woe  
Is after all an earthly song :  
Peace ; come away : we do him wrong  
To sing so wildly : let us go.<sup>1</sup>

Tennyson : In Memoriam

Depending on a very wide spectrum of views expressed by world's leading mystics and men of religion, Schopenhauer delineates the requirements of salvation. Schopenhauer identifies himself with the saints and mystics of Hinduism and Christianity in order to find a solution to the deep suffering pervading human life.

Man is involved in the flow of the will but he can safely tide over it and reach the region of peace where the will wields no influence. Schopenhauer postulates change in the subject as a necessary condition. He points out that transformation in mind and nature of man alone can free him from suffering. Man stands necessarily in sin. This sin should be overcome by man. And no doubt his efforts can only help in tiding over the sin. Schopenhauer finds in the teachings of St. Augustine the problem of sin considered realistically. "August-



tine taught in his books *De libero arbitrio*, that only as Adam before the fall was guiltless and possessed of a free-will, but for ever after is involved in the necessity of sin."<sup>2</sup> The original sin could be obliterated or escaped. The state of salvation speaks of a condition where sin exists not and where peace and balance prevail. There is no feeling of separateness but a forgetfulness of one's own identity and being. 'Ghayriyat' or 'Otherness' could not be felt in the state of salvation and bliss as some Sufis of Islam contend. The ego of man gets sublimated. In the state of salvation and bliss Khud (Self) or Khudi (Ipseity) takes a new meaning. When a man who has experienced this state sees nothing but God and cries out 'I am Brahman,' it speaks of a condition of man in which he abstracts from all his limitations and finitude. Whether this consciousness of oneness is only subjective as Mujaddid contends or it is real, is another question.

The realisation of the identity of the inner nature of all beings is gained. Nirvana or the denial of the will leads man to this supreme knowledge. "But this identity (of the inner nature of all beings) only really exists in the condition of the denial of the will (Nirvana), for the assertion of the will (Samsara) has for its form the phenomenal appearance of it in multiplicity."<sup>3</sup> In the denial of the will-to-live and the phenomenal world Schopenhauer sees essence of salvation.

The state of salvation has been spoken as cessation of all sorrows. Buddhists speak of the state of Nirvana as lying in transcendence from birth. "Whatsoever is subject to the condition of origination is subject also to the condition of cessation."<sup>4</sup> In reaching the state of salvation or Nirvana one crosses the phenomenal world, the world of frustration and sufferings, and enjoys bliss and peace. "The most excelled, refreshing Nirvana, quiet and unmoved, free from sorrow."<sup>5</sup> There is joy in real sense, only in Nirvana, and only wisdom can lead to Nirvana or salvation. "With birth there comes the rush of sorrows, only in Nirvana is there joy. The accumulated fuel heaped up by the power of karman

(deeds), this the fire of wisdom alone can consume."<sup>6</sup> Nirvana has also been described as ambrosial.<sup>7</sup>

Nirvana is devoid of any sense of separateness of the being. Schopenhauer also seems to appreciate this view. The total merger of the individual in the reality is the aim of man. Schopenhauer sees that in the march to the unknown, the intelligence of man can at its best provide only a transitive phase. Something else than intelligence is required. "Even the most perfect intelligence can only be a transition step to that to which no knowledge can ever extend: indeed such an intelligence can, in the nature of things, only assume the position of the movement of the attainment of perfect insight."<sup>8</sup> It is through insight or rather through intuition that the reality could be comprehended. The state of salvation as such lies therefore necessarily beyond the reach of intelligence. It is enjoyed and experienced but defies the grasp of intellect. When the intelligence of man is powerless to persist in the state of salvation the individuality in being cannot be maintained.

Ramanuja holds that the consciousness of the ego persists in the state of emancipation.<sup>9</sup> Further, he qualifies emancipation as the pure existence of the highest self consequent on the passing away of the limiting adjuncts.<sup>10</sup> But though the 'I' persists, it does not provide the knowledge of the worldly affairs or the senses, nor are the cognitive faculties of man active. Indeed, in the state of emancipation, the soul has no specific cognitions; "in the state of release, where the soul's unlimited essential intelligence is not constructed in any way, there is none of those specific cognitions by which the Self identifying itself with the body, the sense-organs, etc."<sup>11</sup> Ramanuja enlarges on this topic and seeks out to establish his view on the basis of Upanishads. "Scripture declares the absence of consciousness in the state of final release; when he has departed there is no consciousness (Bri-rep-11. 4, 12); where the Self is spoken of as having knowledge for its essential nature, the meaning only is that knowledge contri-

butes its specific quality, and the expression is therefore not to be urged in its literal sense."<sup>12</sup>

In the state of Nirvana, one is no longer liable to be reborn, as he has neither attachments nor accumulated Karmas. Buddha declares to Ananda: "Hell is destroyed for me, and rebirth as an animal, or a ghost, or in any place of woe. I am converted, I am no longer liable to be reborn in a state of suffering, and am assured of final salvation."<sup>13</sup>

"There is no happiness higher than rest. Hunger is the worst of diseases, the body the greatest of pains; if one knows this truly, that is Nirvana, the highest happiness."<sup>14</sup> When the conflicts of the mind are solved and the attachments have lost their grip, man becomes free. He enjoys the state of Nirvana which is full of serenity. "Having left the five obstacles of the mind, having dispelled all sin, being independent, having cut off the sin of desire, let one wander alone like a rhinoceros."<sup>15</sup> Again "Penance and chastity, discernment of the noble truths and the realisation of Nibbana, this is the highest blessing."<sup>16</sup> The enfoldment of its potentialities are fully achieved in the state of salvation. In the state of Nirvana only, real happiness is to be sought. The Jaina Sutras confirm it. They declare: "When you have heard the words of the illustrious and famous son of Mriga, his perfect practice of austerities, and his liberation, famous in the three worlds, you will despise wealth, the cause of misery, and the fetter of egoism the course of many dangers, and you will bear the excellent and pleasant yoke of the Law that leads to the great happiness of Nirvana."<sup>17</sup> "There is incomparable happiness arising from Nirvana."<sup>18</sup>

Man is enveloped by consciousness. And with its destruction, he joins the eternal order of the universe, and gains the final Nirvana. But until body lasts the Nirvana seems to be hedged in by limitations, though the Buddhist does not always hold fast to any hard and sharp distinctions. "When the envelopment of the consciousness has been annihilated, then he becomes free of all fear, beyond the reach of change, enjoying final

Nirvana."<sup>19</sup>

The state of salvation is characterised by its freedom from the conditions of life. Schopenhauer also strikes the same note. "It is not the restless strain of life, the jubilant delight which has keen suffering as its preceding or succeeding condition, in the experience of the man who loves life; but it is a peace that cannot be shaken, a deep rest and inward serenity, a state which we cannot behold without the greatest longing when it is brought before our eyes or our imagination, because we at once recognise it as that which alone is right, infinitely surprising everything else, upon which our better self cries within us the great supreme *aude*."<sup>20</sup>

The enjoyment comes in pure contemplation, be it the contemplation of the artist or of the religious seer. "We are no longer the individual whose knowledge is subordinated to the service of its constant willing, the correlative of the particular thing to which objects are objects, but the eternal subject of knowing purified from will, the correlative of the Platonic Idea."<sup>21</sup> The individual has to transform into the eternal subject of knowing which in fact he is. But the realisation seems possible only in a state of artistic contemplation. In the enjoyment of this state, he soars to the transcendental realm, the realm of eternal Ideas. He becomes one with them and thus remain in eternity and universality. Once man realises the goal, he can escape the painful existence and dependence on will. The mastery of the will must end. The desire of life's attractions do not perturb a man who enjoys the state of salvation: "delivered from the ardent strain of will, we seem to rise out of the heavy atmosphere of earth, are the happiest which we experience. From this we can understand how blessed the life of a man must be whose will is silenced, not merely for a moment, as in the enjoyment of the beautiful, but for ever, indeed altogether extinguished, except as regards the last glimmering spark that retains the body in life, and will be extinguished with its death."<sup>22</sup>



The peace and the serenity gained in the contemplation of the beautiful in plastic art and paintings is ephemeral. Schopenhauer is aware that the artistic contemplation can give man only momentary salvation. This state of salvation ends when the contemplation of the beautiful comes to an end. Such momentary happiness holds no guarantee to deliver a man totally from the tutelage of the will. The path of denial and of religion accords salvation a lasting character. No wonder that Schopenhauer acclaims the views of Hindu saints and Christian mystics and those who preached and practised asceticism and religion.

In the state of salvation, there is total absence of the will-to-live. The perpetration of injustice on the part of the individual makes him more liable to be enmeshed in the hold of the world and its allurements. When we yield to temptation of life we assist the unwholesome play of the will-to-live.<sup>23</sup> It is a state of happiness because it is a state of harmony. It is a state of bliss because it is a condition where a man is saturated with the moral virtues of goodness.

The faculty of cognition is primordially the servant of the will. "Originally and essentially cognition is but the servant of the will; with animals servitude never ceases."<sup>24</sup> But the cognition of Ideas gives man the highest kind of knowledge. In the apprehension of the Ideas only that a man gains the truth and the fruit of his quest. "The cognition of Ideas implies the cessation of this servitude in man, so that, the knowing subject ceases to be merely individual, and rests in fixed contemplation of the object presented for cognition, apart from its connection with any other object, in which contemplation he becomes lost."<sup>25</sup> In the state of salvation a man though apparently lost in the contemplation of the Ideas finds the truth of all truths and hence freedom from the servitude of the will.

Schopenhauer believed that in art the intuition of the artist translates in the medium of art the pure Idea. When he discovers the presence of such Idea in Art, the individual is transported to a region of eternal



Ideas. "Art, the work of genius, repeats the eternal Ideas apprehended in pure contemplation, the essential and permanent in all the phenomena of the world."<sup>26</sup> The realisation of the universal idea leads man to super-personal heights. The religious consciousness has also postulated the ultimate reality which is God, and when the individual awakens to His presence, he finds himself beyond time, space, and causality and enjoys the eternal bliss. It is only in the artistic vision and intuitive apprehension that the realisation of the eternal Idea is possible. "The reality of life, the will, the existence itself, is perpetual suffering, partly pitiable and partly dreadful; the same, on the contrary, as simple notion, viewed in pure intuition or repeated by art, affords a significant spectacle: freedom from torment in the enjoyment of the beautiful. But this knowledge does not release us for ever from life, but only for moments, as is, therefore, not the complete way out of life, not a **quietive** of the will, such as is necessary for permanent release. The will **affirms** itself, when, after the knowledge of life has begun, it wills life in the same manner in which it previously without knowledge as blind impulse, willed it."<sup>27</sup> In the words of Copleston the escape in art is only partial. The aesthetic pleasure in the beautiful affords us only freedom from the will, which is partial and momentary. Schopenhauer views aesthetic pleasure as giving us an illusion that we are free. He says: "The aesthetic pleasure in the beautiful consists in great measure in the fact that in entering the state of pure contemplation we are lifted for the moment above all willing, i.e., all wishes and cares; we become, as it were, freed from ourselves."<sup>28</sup> Though the conception of art, as Schopenhauer has developed, has charm of its own and may indeed be regarded as his most noteworthy contribution, yet the philosopher had to resort to religion and ethics for help and sustenance. Without religion, above all, Schopenhauer's theory of salvation becomes only an aesthetic longing without any substance. One might well feel that one has eluded with success the tentacles

of sufferings and pain but woeful is the lot of man when he falls back and sees no way out.

Schopenhauer's view of aesthetic appreciation has been criticised by Copleston on the ground that the appreciation of art in Ideas is impossible. For, according to him, aesthetic appreciation of beauty remains empty without the medium of senses. It cannot remain only intellectual. "Aesthetic appreciation of beauty in art is, therefore, not only intellectual in character, but also sensitive and this not merely accidentally but essentially."<sup>29</sup> Further, Copleston affirms that aesthetic appreciation could not work without the medium of forms and that all attempts to separate form and content is futile. "In the work of art too, the product of human reason, form is essentially wedded to the material, and it cannot be abstracted and expressed as an intellectual idea, without draining it of all content as an aesthetic form and turning it into a pale and bloodless ghost; a bare skeleton or scheme, a mere caricature."<sup>30</sup>

But Schopenhauer takes art only as a medium which helps man to transport himself to a region even beyond the reach of art. Art is only a stepping-stone to the realm of Ideas. Art with its material and content is not necessarily associated with the apprehension of the Ideas.

Art brings within easy reach what only religion ultimately attains in its fulness. Art provides a man with a correct perspective. "In Art too, we are ourselves free; we see ourselves as we really are; we realise the Idea of man; we become a soul or potency in which the life of all things at once beats and expresses itself and is at rest."<sup>31</sup> In short, through art men can realise the truth of Tattwamasi. This encounter with the Ideas in art comes to man as a true experience of peace and happiness. He is no more a creature of this world. He is free from bondage and pain of life. His existence and being awaken in a realm where peace reigns and calm prevails. "In arts and in beauty we encounter something that bids us be still and contemplate simply the what of the world, letting go our hold on the process

and development in the world, and our own efforts to develop our lives and to attain to more life. In the contemplation of Ideas, he holds, we are no longer conscious of the distinction between the attaining and the attained, between the subject and the object, between the Will and the Idea. There is no pursuit therein of the ends of the will, and consequently no pain. Feeling, according to Schopenhauer, has to do with the will, and so there is neither pleasure nor pain in artistic contemplation—it is "disinterested," as Kant and many others have said."<sup>32</sup>

Schopenhauer thinks that the state of salvation is fully saturated with harmony. Joy and happiness issue forth from such a state as natural corollaries. Only in a condition of harmony and tranquillity does a man develop receptivity to truth. The state of harmony has been described by the word Sattva in the Indian philosophy. A mind dominated by sattvic elements is always pure and serene and remains unperturbed by outward influences.

Salvation state is ineffable and one who reaches it dwells in full serenity. "He in whom a desire for the Ineffable (Nirvana) has sprung up, who is satisfied in his mind, and whose thoughts are not bewildered by love, he is called Urdhamsrot as (carried upwards by the stream)."<sup>33</sup> The consummation of the harmonious state of salvation is extinction, cessation of rebirth and death. One who has entered the fold of salvation or Nirvana becomes perfect. Sin or desires could not touch him. Anger or violence could not effect him.

"Let the Muni be truthful, without arrogance, un-deceitful, free from slander, nor angry, let him overcome avarice.

"Let the man who has turned his mind to Nibbana conquer sleepiness, and sloth; let him not live together with indolence, let him not indulge in conceit.

"Let him not be led into falsehood, let him not turn his affection to form; let him penetrate arrogance, let him wander abstaining from violence.

"Let him not delight in what is old, let him not

leave with what is new, let him not grieve for what is lost, let him not give himself up to desire.

"(This desire) I call greed, the great stream, I call (it) precipitation, craving, a trouble, a bog of lust difficult to cross."<sup>34</sup>

The state of salvation is not a condition of inertia and lethargy. It is struggle continued by the sage to live up to the standards of truth and abstention from low desires and avarice. Pure in intention and pure in action man now lives in eternal glory. The bliss of the state of salvation or Nirvana prepares man to cross the domain of life and death and become one with the universal reality. Any plan of future action troubles him not. "No beginning, end, or middle; and no deceptive systems of philosophy; this is the standpoint of the wise men and sages; the certain and exhausted termination, (complete Nirvana)."<sup>35</sup> For what can there more to be gained or coveted than salvation or Nirvana? By attaining salvation the cessation of all Sanskharas become possible. Only salvation ends the Sanskharas of man. Sanskharas which cling to his soul throughout the period of his birth and rebirths, end only in the state of salvation, when man becomes transfigured. Salvation comes by "cessation of the whole round of life, and is the same as Nirvana."<sup>36</sup> Buddha has characterised the state of Nirvana as consisting of coolness which is absence of desires and passion. He declares: "I have overcome all foes; I have left everything, and have obtained emancipation by the destruction of desire. Having myself gained knowledge, whom should I call master?"<sup>37</sup>

Nirvana is the nectar of life. Nirvana quenches thirst and brings joy. Perfection, bliss and happiness all sprout from within when man comes to know the secret of salvation. The state of salvation is ineffable as it cannot be likened unto any other state. Buddha taught it "to the wise and discerning who came to him with listening ear."<sup>38</sup> Schopenhauer's way to salvation runs on parallel lines. Tragic is indeed the fate of man; but man has also within his reach means to evade the tragedy. The tragedy in life is not inevitable. Salvation



is lived and not thought about. He who has not tasted Nirvana and experienced it can never divine what it is. He remains a stranger to it. "It is by hearing the glad words of those who have seen Nirvana, that they who have not received it know how happy a state it is."<sup>39</sup>

One has to struggle hard in order to gain the exalted state of salvation. Pain is incurred in the quest of salvation; but in the end when the salvation is achieved, one gets full peace and bliss. Nagasena, explaining to King Milinda, says: "O King, is Nirvana all bliss, and there is no pain mingled with it. Those who are in quest of Nirvana afflict their minds and bodies it is true, restrain themselves in standing, walking, sitting, lying and in food, suppress their sleep, keep their sense in subjection, abandon their very body and their life. But it is after they have this, in pain, sought after Nirvana, that they enjoy the Nirvana which is bliss unalloyed—as teachers do the bliss of knowledge. Thus is it, O King, that Nirvana is all bliss, and there is no pain mingled with it. For Nirvana is one thing and pain another."<sup>40</sup> The state of Nirvana knows no affliction and in the words of Schopenhauer it is not haunted by the presence of the will-to-live. In the state of Nirvana, man enjoys the pleasure of sitting on soft coach. The sweet coach of Nirvana or salvation gives peace and tranquillity.

"Let him with eyes be as one blind,

And he who hears be as the deaf,

He who can speak be as the dumb,

The man of strength as were he weak

As each new object rises to his ken,

On the sweet coach of blest Nirvana's peace

Let him lie down and rest."<sup>41</sup>

Not only the pursuit of the noble path and a life free of attachments, abstinence from wilful injury to all living beings and unconditional ahimsa but love and sympathy without any reservations for all that lives and moves are prerequisites of salvation. The Jaina Sutras especially stress this aspect of Nirvana. "He



should cease to injure living beings whether they move or not, on high, below, and on earth. For this has been called the Nirvana, which consists in peace."<sup>42</sup> It is through the assimilation of the wisdom as it is proclaimed by the doctrine of 'Tattwamasi' that the spirit of non-violence can grow in man. Jainism urge on the would-be aspirant never to give way to untruth. "A sage setting out for the real good (viz., liberation), should not speak untruth; this (rule, they say) comprises Nirvana and the whole of carefulness. He should not do works or cause others doing them."<sup>43</sup> The abstention from work here is simply meant for works done with profit and loss as their motive.

The state of salvation confers on man mysterious powers. In Buddhism it has been maintained that the Arahats on reaching Nirvana acquire the transcendental powers of Buddha.<sup>44</sup> The state of salvation is opposed to the objects of life. Salvation brings liberation from the world. When the call of the world persists in man, peace and bliss become rarely his. "Those who, having understood this, are thoughtful, calm, because they have seen the Dhamma, tranquil and divine, such have crossed desire in this world."<sup>45</sup>

Man overcomes plurality. It is false to maintain that the many is not really one. "Whoever wants to know the true nature of Brahman must first annihilate the appearance of plurality that obstructs true knowledge, just as a man wishing to ascertain the true nature of some jar or similar object placed in a dark room must at first remove darkness."<sup>46</sup> The oneness of the one is paramount. The many is deceptive and is born of the principle of sufficient reason.

The text of Buddhakarika confirms again the view that salvation or Nirvana brings to an end all future births. A man really escapes from the world in salvation.<sup>47</sup> One who realises the state of salvation is no more liable to err.<sup>48</sup>

Passionless and without desires man struggles to attain salvation.<sup>49</sup> Buddha's teachings have been described as a fountain flowing with the purest waters of

emancipation.<sup>50</sup>

No doubt, Schopenhauer was influenced by Buddhist scriptures. In his formulation of salvation theory he also echoes the teaching of the Upanishads. He concludes like a follower of Upanishads and a disciple of the Buddha that salvation is a state of bliss and ananda and thus he gives his doctrine a form in tune with the spirit of religion. Schopenhauer has more or less succeeded in this almost impossible task of reconciling the blatantly irreligious background of his thought with the spirit of religious consciousness. Salvation is the meeting ground of Schopenhauer's irrationalism and religion. If salvation has not occupied a place of such momentous significance in his system, his thought would have culminated in blank pessimism and Godless irrationalism. Schopenhauer was sober enough to admit that the dynamic reality of the will persists not necessarily as a blind and irrational force but has in itself the latent power to assume a rational and humane form. It does not create a Frankenstein to destroy the good that dwells in it but on the contrary it projects intelligence to transform the brute force into meaningful activity. If it is to remain static and as it is then the manifestation of the will on various levels would be an impossibility. It reminds one of the emergence of new qualities which have been given so much prominence by the exponents of Emergent Evolution. Self-consciousness and rationality emerge now as a novelty and surprise on the plane of will's objectification.

## CHAPTER VI

### SALVATION : ITS ATTAINMENT

"Abandoned in the world, given to every misery finding no way out from imminent annihilation man forces his way to deliverance, be it for help in the world or for bliss in eternity, be it for emancipation from momentary distress or for salvation from distress as such."<sup>1</sup>

—Karl Jaspers: *Von Der Wahrheit*

The denial of the irrational Will paves the way toward the attainment of salvation. Man becomes creative as well as compassionate for the suffering humanity when he reaches the heights of salvation.

Man has first to discover the qualities of truth and goodness. Then there is evolution from the cruder to the subtler forms and qualities. Nature seems to be evolving. Below animate level evolution in nature is mainly mechanical. But in man with the rise of self-consciousness, the process of evolution lies through personal initiative and the accent lies on self-culture. The latent spirit in man seeks its full manifestation. That which is hidden seeks fuller unfoldment. By such unfoldment, the veil of ignorance and nescience is removed and the relation with the infinite spirit is established. The spirit of man continuously strives to

become free. And it attains freedom only when it becomes perfect. Man seeks perfection, and until perfection is gained the desire for liberation remains unfulfilled.

Schopenhauer's view of salvation has many facets. Christian, Brahmanic and Buddhist strands run through his theory. It is a composite picture which reveals Schopenhauer's broad sympathy and catholic interest. "If now we consider the will-to-live as a whole and objectively, we have, in accordance with what has been said, to think of it as involved in an illusion, to escape from which thus to deny its whole existing endeavour, is what all religions denote by self-renunciation, abnegatio sin ipsius; for the true self is the will-to-live."<sup>2</sup> But in the denial of self man is denying actually a part of the self, because if he denies the very reality of which he is a phenomenon, his own existence is brought into jeopardy. Can a part deny the whole? The dynamic will is amoral and unconscious but in man it has taken a new turn. This new turn has given man a sense of morality and harmony. Man in the spirit of Schopenhauer's words denies only the baser part of the will which is instinctive, impulsive, and amoral. As the will-to-live is blind it is amoral. But when life is saturated with compassion and sympathy the same will-to-live becomes a help and guide to man. The seeming paradox of his theory has rational foundations.

Schopenhauer has spared no pains to show the growth of moral virtues from their amoral basis. Cardinal virtues like justice and benevolence emerge from the irrational abyss of the will-to-live and like the virtuous children of an unruly father they bring him back to his senses. The cultivation of moral virtues has a pedagogical value. Morality counteracts the evil of the source. It is significant that Schopenhauer's attitude strikes a note in harmony with the religious consciousness. "The moral virtues, then justice and benevolence, since if they are pure they spring, as I have shown, from the fact that the will-to-live seeing through the principium individuationis, recognises itself in all its mani-

festation, are accordingly primarily a sign, a symptom, that the self-manifesting will is no longer firmly held in that illusion, but the disillusion already begins to take place ; so that one might metaphysically say it already flaps its wings to fly away from it."<sup>3</sup> The integrity of man, and inviolable justice lead to resignation and the denial of the will-to-live. The quality of integrity comes to man only when he has an unbiassed mind. Schopenhauer always draws upon the rich and inexhaustible source of religion which has brought salvation to legions of men down the ages. He is fully aware of the fact that the way to salvation is difficult and not every man's work. "For true integrity, inviolable justice, this first and most important of cardinal virtues, is so hard a task that whoever professes it, unconditionally and from the bottom of his heart has to make sacrifices that soon deprive life of the sweetness which is demanded to make it enjoyable, and thereby turn away the will from it, thus lead to resignation."<sup>4</sup> Benevolence helps man in his effort to identify himself with the entire humanity. An attempt at one's identification with mankind at large may bring in its wake untold suffering, perhaps even death. Benevolence coupled with justice makes even asceticism superfluous. This fact is well illustrated in Buddhism. Buddhism never glorified asceticism and the ascetic way to obtain Nirvana. On the other hand, it stresses the need of moral culture and compliance with moral imperatives. The rigorous application of moral principles to one's own life makes it saturated with the true spirit of asceticism. Not in the mortification of the body but in the cultivation of the virtues embodied in the eight-fold path that Buddha has visualised Nirvana. It serves no purpose to trouble the body in order to gain salvation. The loss of one's reason, of one's initiative and judgement, is bound to create a morbid state of mind. One can dispense with asceticism but surely not with the spirit which works behind the ascetic ideal, with the capacity and power to say 'no' to the temptations of life. "Just on this account Buddhism is free from all strict and excessive



asceticism, which plays a large part in Brahmanism, thus from intentional self-mortification. It rests satisfied with the celibacy, voluntary poverty, humility and obedience of the monks, with abstention from animal food, as also from all worldliness."<sup>5</sup> But it remains a fact that even asceticism may lead to the moral path to the virtues of benevolence and justice. Mortification of the body by ascetic means is only a way to control the baser instincts of greed, lust and injustice, of the wavering mind.

The ways to salvation are many. Schopenhauer has sympathy with more than one. Whichever way one may pursue what concerns us most is the attainment of salvation itself, the liberation from the tyranny of the will-to-live. His own view of salvation is derived from the religious idea. Buddhism, Brahmanism and Christianity have contributed greatly in the formation of his religious philosophy and of his idea of salvation.

The Aitareya-Aranyaka declares that "the devotee gains the highest knowledge, that of the Highest-self in himself, and then, at the dissolution of the Brahma-Loka, he obtains complete freedom with Brahman."<sup>6</sup> For an aspirant to salvation it has been declared: "Know me, O illustrious one, to be the Self of all fields (Whether born from the womb or arisen from an egg, or from seed, or from a germ or shoot). Those striving after final emancipation must constantly seek to understand the 'field' and to obtain a knowledge of the knower of the field."<sup>7</sup> In his struggle to tone down the pessimistic strain of the absolute reality of the will Schopenhauer has turned to religion for guidance. The Upanishad's view of salvation found acceptance with Schopenhauer. That highest knowledge leads to emancipation is echoed by Schopenhauer. Such highest knowledge is, for Schopenhauer, the knowledge of the Ideas in contemplation. He accepts the truth of 'Tattwamasi,' which proclaims the identity of the reality underlying all existence. He had no doubts about the way in which the absolute knowledge can come to man. In the contemplation of Ideas, or on the path of religion and holi-

ness, it comes to man and then only that he can escape his tragic fate.

That highest knowledge leads to salvation has found expression in Sanatsugatiya where it is declared: "(But) the man of understanding attains by knowledge to the everlasting glory—for there is no other way to it."<sup>8</sup> Again Svetasvatar Upanishad says:

"From meditating on him, from joining him, from becoming one with him there is further cessation of all illusion in the end.

"When that is known all fetters fall off, sufferings are destroyed, and birth and death cease. From meditating on him there arises, on the dissolution of the body, the third state, that of universal lordship; but he only who is alone is satisfied."

"This, which rests eternally within the self, should be known; and beyond this not anything has to be known. By knowing the enjoyer, the enjoyed, and the ruler, everything has been declared to be three-fold and this is Brahman."<sup>9</sup>

In the same Upanishad, it has been said:

"And by means of the real nature of his self he sees, as by a lamp, the real nature of Brahman, then having known the unborn, eternal God, who is beyond all natures, he is freed from all fetters."<sup>10</sup>

In Sankara's commentary on the Vedanta Sutras, we read: "Removal of the obstacles which lie in the way of release is the only fruit of the knowledge of Brahman."<sup>11</sup>

The Vedantic conception of highest knowledge lies in the realisation of the Brahman, and jnana only leads to salvation. Schopenhauer accepts the wisdom of the Vedanta and sees in it a genuine attempt to free man from bondage. "Since, further the goal to which moral virtues lead is that which is here pointed out, the Vedanta philosophy rightly says that the entrance of true knowledge, with entire resignation in its train, the new birth, then the morality or immorality of the past life is a matter of indifference."<sup>12</sup>

Schopenhauer sees in the Vedantic way of religion

and philosophy effective means of attaining salvation. The way of all religions including Vedantic is alike in content. They all aim at salvation. Religion, as an epitome of man's psychological and moral being, answers his inmost needs. The way of religion has always led the aspirant towards peace and happiness. Freedom from bondage, freedom from egoism and doubts, are gained by the fulfilment of the religious truths. Religion leads man to the transcendant and hereby opens a new vista. The presence of pain, the fear of death and the cares of life are born of man's ignorance. Pain and sorrows are to a great extent self-inflictions. But when the self of man realises its identity with the Infinite, all pains vanish.

Knowledge could not dawn on man unless he has seen through the principle of sufficient reason. Nescience lasts so long as he is enmeshed in this illusion. With ignorance no escape from suffering is possible. He says: "just as a sailor sits in a boat trusting to his frail barque in a stormy sea, unbounded in every direction, rising and falling with the howling mountainous waves, so in the midst of a world of sorrows the individual man sits quietly supported by and trusting the principium individuationis, or the way in which the individual knows things as phenomena. The boundless world full of suffering in the infinite past, in the infinite future, is strange to him, indeed is to him but a fable; his ephemeral person, his extensionless present, his momentary satisfaction, this alone has reality for him; and he does all to maintain this, so long as his eyes are not opened by a better knowledge."<sup>13</sup>

The knowledge that creation is one is an integral part of the Vedantic teaching. There is no difference in creation and what differences seemingly divide its parts are dispelled with the dawn of a new consciousness. Schopenhauer is aware of the resemblance of his doctrine of the one indivisible reality with the ancient Vedantic wisdom of 'Tattwamasi.' When he finds unexpected confirmation of his theory in the eternal teaching of the venerable past, he gets all he needs.

Schopenhauer takes immense pains to show how the dynamic will has found in man some new qualities which are absent in its lower grades of objectification. He says : "The will is the thing-in-itself of every phenomenon ; a truth, which with reference to action, I do not know how to express better than by the formula of the Vedas already quoted : "Tattwamasi ! (This Thou art) !" Whoever is able to say this to himself, with regard to every being with whom he comes in contact, with clear knowledge and firm inward conviction, is certain of all virtue and blessedness, and is on the direct road to salvation."<sup>14</sup>

Schopenhauer's idea of sex as the embodiment of will-to-live has its basis in Christian and in other forms of religious asceticism. The emphasis on celibacy and virginity are common to them. The absolute negation of sex has found favour with the hermits of all religions. "Celibacy and virginity are set up as the higher consecration of Christianity through which one enters the rank of elect."<sup>15</sup> For Schopenhauer, even a lawful marriage does not conduce to peace, and when marriage is allowed in Christianity it is only as a compromise with the sinful nature of man. "Marriage, in genuine Christianity, is merely a compromise with the sinful nature of man, as a concession, something allowed to those who lack strength to aspire to the highest, an expedient to avoid greater evil ; in this sense it receives the sanction of the Church in order that the bond may be indissoluble."<sup>16</sup>

Asceticism can pervade the entire life, actions and thoughts of man. A reference to Apastamba's aphorism will illustrate the importance that was attached to ascetic means in the East. "Freedom from anger, from exaltation, from grumbling, from covetousness, from perplexity, from hypocrisy (and) furtiveness, truthfulness, moderation in eating, silencing slander, freedom from envy, self-denying, liberality, avoiding to accept gifts, uprightness, affability, extinction of passions, subjection of the senses, peace with all created beings, consideration (of the mind on the contemplation of the Atman), regulation of one's conduct according to that of



Aryas, peacefulness and contentedness;—these (good qualities) have been settled by the agreement (of the wise) for all (the four) orders; he who according to the precepts of the sacred law, practises these, enters the universal soul.”<sup>17</sup> Asceticism and its spirit cannot be interpreted as standing simply for the negative way of life. Even thinkers who pass through the storm and stress of life, suffered and enjoyed life in its fulness, have given expression to the moment of negation in the development of character. It is another question whether asceticism can become the be-all and end-all of life. But that within its own limits man is bound to dispense with the goods of life could not be denied. Goethe's Faust exclaims :

“Renounce ! renounce ! is still the word :

This is the everlasting song

In every ear that ceaseless rings,

And which, alas, our whole life long,

Hoarsely each passing moment sings.”

Now to revert to the East. Akaranga Sutra has stressed the way in which the wise attain to perfection. “He who is great and withdraws his mind from the outer world, should learn the teaching of the (Tirthankaras) through the teaching (of the Akarya); by his own innate knowledge, or through the instruction of the highest, or having heard it from others. A wise man should not break the commandment. Examining all (wrong) doctrines from all sides and in all respects, one should clearly understand (and reject) them. ‘Knowing the delight of this world, circumspect and restrained, one should lead the life of an ascetic.’ ‘Desiring liberation, a hero should, through the sacred lore ever be victorious.”<sup>18</sup> Schopenhauer has in him the intuitive sympathy to feel the subtle tendencies of the East.

The ascetic spirit is not limited to any particular function of the body. The religious practices and prayers, acts of charity and sympathy and a belief in the inviolable sanctity of life, all depict the ascetic tinge in the life of man. “A Brahmana may be beyond doubt obtain final emancipation by solely repeating (those



prayers), whether he performs any other religious observance or not; one who is benevolent towards all creatures (and does not slay them for sacrifices) is justly called a Brahmana (or one united to Brahman)."<sup>10</sup>

What the Brahmans held to be the efficacy of certain mantras for the salvation of man may be ignored for our purpose. But 'Tattwamasi' is in no way inferior to any mantra. Even the repetition of the mantras was meant to awaken in man a state of trans-consciousness. They were not at all supposed to represent certain words but to introduce in man, bound as he is in the day-to-day routine, a new light and a new awakening. It cannot be expected of course from a philosopher whose philosophy, however irrationalistic it may pretend to be, is deeply rooted in the intellectualism of the Greek thought, to consider the technique of the Yoga for the attainment of salvation. He is only concerned with the goal. And for the attainment of this goal he thinks the triple way of art, science and religion as sufficient unto themselves. Even his idea of religion, especially of the Vedantic religion, is limited by the coloured glasses of Western traditions and intellect. Somehow or other man must escape his gloomy fate. Only the will-to-live must be subdued at all costs, and deliverance must be effected. The all pervading gloom forces him to seek light in whatever corner of the earth it may be available. Hence, his eclecticism. Now it is easily intelligible why his conception of salvation is partly Buddhist, partly Vedantic and partly Christian. It is in tune with the noble spirit of the Geeta where the limitations of asceticism are clearly shown and the character of a true devotee is clearly marked.

"Devotion is not his, O Arjuna, who eats too much, nor his who eats not at all; not his who is addicted to too much sleep, nor his who is (ever) awake. That devotion which destroys (all) misery is his, who takes due food and exercise, who toils duly in all works, and who sleeps and awakes (in) due (time). When (a man's) mind well restrained becomes steady upon the self alone, then he being indifferent to all objects of desire, is said

to be devoted. As a light standing in a windless (place) flickers not, that is declared to be the parallel for a devotee, whose mind is restrained, and who devotes his self to abstraction."<sup>20</sup>

The body of man equally demands attention. When it is properly tuned, it can itself become the channel of spiritual progress. *Manu* says: "Let him destroy the taints through suppression of the breath, (the production of) sin by fixed attention, all sensual attachments by restraining (his senses and organs) and all qualities that are not lordly by meditation."<sup>21</sup>

Schopenhauer calls upon man to pledge himself for compassion and justice. But until the body is not fully controlled, it could not be employed for any better purpose. The Jain philosophers think that "Right knowledge, conduct, and austerities, beings who follow this road, will obtain beatitude."<sup>22</sup> They further emphasise that only "by the teaching of pure knowledge, by the avoidance of ignorance and delusion, and by the destruction of love and hatred, one arrives at final deliverance which is nothing but bliss."<sup>23</sup> In full agreement with others they emphasise the need of purity in life, thought and action. Worldly possessions are a taboo to a Jain monk. Neither wife nor children, neither attachment nor affection for the world should have any place in human life. "Try to realise that you are single and alone; thereby you will obtain liberation; mind, this is no false assertion! This liberation is not anything unreal, but the best thing. An ascetic is free from anger, and delights in the truth."<sup>24</sup> Pleasure-seeking and comfort-loving men could not rise to spiritual heights. A man has to accumulate all the strength of mind and body in his attempt to gain salvation. "Abstain from sexual intercourse with women, do not acquire property; a man possessed of carefulness will, beyond doubt, be a saviour (to others) in all circumstances."<sup>25</sup>

With his persistent emphasis on the denial of the will, and on the efficacy of ethical and moral values, and the need of ascetic discipline for overcoming the blind desires and the sufferings of life, there is no need

to wonder if he is ultimately led to believe in the ascetic form of religious absorption as the safest road to final salvation. That Schopenhauer had genuine faith in religion, one need not doubt. In fact, his view of salvation is religious in its core and is related to eastern religions and is in harmony with the teachings of saints and monks of India. If his conception of salvation is considered in itself isolated from his system, it would no doubt create the impression of a truly religious character. This is stated in his own inimitable style. "We find their ethical teachings variously and powerfully expressed in the Vedas, Puranas, poems, myths, legends of their saints, maxims and precepts, we see that it includes love of neighbour with complete renunciation of self-love ; love generally, not confined to mankind, but including all living creatures ; benevolence, even to the hard-won wages of daily toil, unlimited patience towards all who injures us, the requittal of all wickedness, however base, with goodness and love ; voluntary and glad endurance of all ignominy ; abstinence of all animal food, perfect chastity and renunciation of all sensual pleasures for him who strives after true holiness ; the surrender of all possessions, the forsaking of every dwelling place and of all relatives ; deep unbroken solitude, spent in silent contemplation, with voluntary penance and terrible slow self-torture for the absolute mortification of the will, torture which extends to voluntary death by starvation, or by men giving themselves upto crocodiles, or flinging themselves over the sacred precipice in the Himalayas, or being buried alive, or, finally by flinging themselves under the wheels of the huge cars of an idol drawn away amid the singing, shouting and dancing of bayaderes."<sup>26</sup>

Moral virtues only could not form the ultimate ends of man, but they are steps towards salvation. As in the contemplation of the beautiful in artistic creation, the function of art is only to provide a medium to reach the region of calm and peace which is the region of eternal Ideas. The value of moral virtues lies in the fact that they lead a person towards the halcyon bliss

of salvation. "This step is signified in the Christian myth by the eating of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, with which moral responsibility enters, together with original sin. The latter itself is in truth the assertion of the will-to-live, the denial of the will-to-live, in consequence of the appearance of a better knowledge, is on the other hand, salvation."<sup>27</sup>

For Schopenhauer religion and morality could not be different. Their function is the same and they together guide man to salvation. Morality "accompanies man as a light up on his path from the assertion to the denial of the will, or mythically from original sin to salvation through faith in the mediation in the incarnate God (Avatar) or, according to the teaching of the Vedas, through all re-births, which are consequences of the works in each case, until right knowledge appears and with it salvation (final emancipation), Moksha, i.e., reunion with Brahman."<sup>28</sup>

Absorption with the ultimate reality or reunion with Brahman could be attained through meditation. The contemplation of Ideas in art is also a variety of meditation. The aim is to break through the frontiers of time and space. Meditation on the Brahman, the one and the only one, ensures bliss and salvation, and liberates a person from bondage. Redemption comes when the Yogi in his concentration and meditation has the vision of the supreme soul as immanent in all. His mind becomes fully saturated with the joy and bliss of the vision. That God or Brahman is the sustainer and protector of the cosmos and that his proximity is within man's reach is the belief which has religious support. Realisation of the absolute reality in meditation and prayer could not find expression in words. It is the mystic vision. While religions take their point of departure from the idea of *ens realissimum*, Schopenhauer's philosophy ends with the conception of a reality which is moving towards perfection, towards its own transcendence. As an aspirant of salvation man works out his own destiny. The absolute reality of the will is the lord of creation and man is its phenomenal



creation. The jiva or soul of man needs transmutation and purification for the realisation of the absolute reality. Man remains a phenomenon of the will and it is immaterial to his state of phenomenality whether he is capable of perfection or not. But sorrows and sufferings cling to man when he has not yet marked out his own salvation. Salvation is the end of the tragedy of life. As Karl Jaspers has observed that with the idea of salvation the possibility of tragic knowledge is at an end and pessimism can no more sustain itself.

Bhagavadgita, in its turn, postulates that salvation or emancipation could be attained by meditation on the self. "He who, possessed of reverence (for the supreme being) with a steady mind, and with the power of devotion, properly concentrates the life breath between the brows and meditates on the ancient Seer, the ruler, more minute than the minutest atom, the supporter of all, who of an unthinkable form, whose brilliance is like that of the sun, and who is beyond all darkness, he attains to that transcendent and divine being."<sup>29</sup> And again; "Alone let him constantly meditate in solitude on that which is salutary for his soul; for he who meditates in solitude attains supreme bliss."<sup>30</sup>

The mind of man is seldom silent and inactive. As a devitalised mind cannot pursue the strenuous way of salvation, the Yoga aims at infusing in mind new energy by systematic discipline. To accumulate the mental energy by Yogic practices is necessary to gain realisation. The Yogic discipline first brings to a stop all mental activity. Such a course is only preparatory. It enables a man to bring into conscious control stray thoughts which continuously assail mind and sap its energy.

Action or Karma is necessary for the attainment of salvation. Karma is taken to stand for sacrifice. The word Karma denotes physical as well as psychical action. Actions do not necessarily imply actions in bodily form. Even the Vedanta school of philosophers emphasises the significance of human action in the scheme of salvation. These actions are required to be unattached



and without regard for fruits. The disinterested action cleanses the mind of its impurities and awakens goodness and virtue in man. In the Bhagavadgita also the need of action has been stressed. Schopenhauer's view of salvation with his ethics of sympathy and compassion assign to the action of man a no less significant place. Sankaracharya also agrees that noble actions purify the mind.

Broadly speaking, there are three important ways which lead to salvation. Schopenhauer's view is a composite of the three. They are Karma, Jnana and Bhakti. A man who follows the way of Karma leads an active life. He is all action in the world and fulfils his duty in a spirit of detachment. The light of truth provides him guidance and he escapes from the bondage of the results of his action. Actions performed without gain and attachment could not bind man in bondage.

The second way, the way of Jnana or knowledge lies in the recognition of the absolute reality as the substratum of all existence. There is belief in the supremacy of the Self. The object of realisation is the Self of man which is fundamentally not different from the Absolute Self. It is no doubt hard to attain. But if this is experienced and reached man is said to have attained to highest knowledge, the true gnosis. Now, sense objects cannot lure him and bind him.

The third is the path of devotion or Bhakti. Sometimes it is described as superior to all. Bhagavadgita has proclaimed the superiority of the Bhakti method. Through Bhakti or devotion a man could rise to highest plane of consciousness, where he directly participates in the divine life. A devotee or Bhakta is also said to receive the fullest support from God. Bhakti or devotion to God creates humility and meekness. But this humility is the product of annihilated pride and egoism. There remains no pride either of birth, honour, or intellect, in a devotee of God. May be for this reason the way of devotion has been accepted as conducive to the attainment of peace, perfection and salvation.

The function of intelligence is mainly to silence

the craving of the will. The philosopher says: "the end of all intelligence can only be reaction upon the will, since however, all willing is an error, it remains the last work of intelligence to abolish the willing, whose ends it had hitherto served."<sup>31</sup> Intelligence provides man with his unique place in creation. Thanks to intelligence, true knowledge is arrived at, as "intelligence is sufficient to impart to the will that knowledge in consequence of which it denies, and abolishes itself, upon which the individuality, and consequently the intelligence, which is merely a tool of individual, and therefore animal nature perish."<sup>32</sup>

The will goads man to sin and the sins that are committed and the wrongs that are perpetrated require to be made ineffective and the consequences that they lead to demand to be neutralised. "The sinful works and their consequences must be annulled and annihilated, whether by extraneous pardon or by the entrance of a better knowledge; otherwise, the world could hope for no salvation."<sup>33</sup>

Whether the approach to salvation is via mystica or only via negativa, it makes no difference. Schopenhauer has unstinted praise for all methods and he is only interested in conveying the truth which underlies them all. He says: "Quietism, i.e., surrender of all volition, asceticism, i.e., intentional mortification of one's own will, and mysticism, i.e., consciousness of the identity of one's own nature with that of all things or with the kernel of the world, stand in the closest connection; so that whoever professes one of them is gradually led to accept the others, even against his intention. Nothing can be more surprising than the agreement with each other of the writers who present these doctrines, notwithstanding the greatest difference of their age, country and religion, accompanied by the firm certainty and inward confidence with which they set forth the permanence of their inner experience. They do not constitute a sect, which adheres to, defend, and propagates a favourite dogma once laid hold of; indeed the Indian, Christian, and Mohammedan mystics, quietists,

and ascetics are different in every respect, except the inner significance and spirit of their teaching."<sup>34</sup> This makes clear that Schopenhauer has appreciated the essential unity that runs through the diversity of faiths and creeds. Indeed, it was a necessary step for Schopenhauer to take. The gloom and pessimism of Schopenhauer would have remained untempered had he not allowed a doctrine of salvation to grow on the very soil of religious piety and faith. The pessimistic trend of his thought has suddenly converted itself into a doctrine of hope and deliverance. This unexpected shift in the philosophical thought of Schopenhauer bears out the contention that only religion can effect final deliverance, and whether one likes it or not, one is forced to resort to religion for a solution of the great predicament in which man is involved.

Schopenhauer, curiously enough, thinks that mysticism provides man with such everlasting knowledge which is beyond the grasp of both perception and conception. It is through mystic approach that the truth of all truths can be apprehended. "Mysticism in the widest sense is every guidance to the immediate consciousness of that to which neither perception or conception, thus in general no knowledge extends."<sup>35</sup> Schopenhauer has no philosophical scruples to proclaim himself as an adherent of the mystic way. The mystic approach to reality is really the religious way in its deeper significance.

The attainment of Nirvana and perfection according to Jainism require seventy-three articles of guidance. Jainism has made an all-embracing synthesis of all requirements for it. Mahavira's lecture called "the exertion righteousness" is a detailed account of the condition of salvation and affirms with unequivocal emphasis that whosoever follow these articles is assured of perfection, and the beatitude of salvation:

"1. Samvega, longing for liberation; 2. Nirveda, disregard for worldly objects; 3. Dharmasradha, desire of the Law; 4. Gurusadharmikasusrushana, obedience to co-religionists and to the Guru; 5.

Alikana, confession of sins before the Guru; 6. Ninda, repenting of one's sins to oneself; 7. Garka, repenting of one's sins before the Guru; 8. Samayika, moral and intellectual purity of the soul; 9. Katurvimsatistava, adoration of the twenty-four Ginas; 10. Vandana, paying reverence to Guru; 11. Pratikramana, expiation of sins; 12. Kayotsarga, a particular position of the body; 13. Pratyakhyana, self-denial; 14. Stavastutimangala, praises and hymns; 15. Kalasya pratyupekshana, keeping the right time; 16. Prayaskittakarana, practising penance; 17. Kshamapana, begging forgiveness; 18. Svadhyaya, study; 19. Vakana, recital of the sacred texts; 20. Pariprikhana, questioning (the teacher); 21. Paravartana, repetition; 22. Anupreksha, pondering; 23. Dharmakatha, religious discourse; 24. Srutasyaradhana, acquisition of sacred knowledge; 25. Ekagramanahsannivesana, concentration of thoughts; 26. Samyana, control; 27. Tapas, austerities; 28. Vyewadhana, cutting off the Karma; 29. Sukhasata, renouncing pleasure; 30. Apratibaddhata, mental independence; 31. Viki-trasayanasanasevana, using unfrequented lodgings and beds; 32. Vinivartana, turning from the world; 33. Sambhogapratyakhyana, renouncing collection of alms in one district only; 34. Upadhipratyakhyana, renouncing articles of use; 35. Aharapratyakhyana, renouncing food; 36. Kashyapratyakhyana, conquering the passions; 37. Yogapratyakhyana, renouncing the activity; 38. Sarirapratyakhyana, renouncing the body; 39. Sahayapratyakhyana, renouncing the company; 40. Bhaktapratyakhyana, renouncing all food; 41. Sadbhavapratyakhyana, perfect renunciation; 42. Prtirupata, conforming to the standard; 43. Vaiyavritya, doing service; 44. Sarvagunasamparnata, fulfilling all virtues; 45. Vitaragata, freedom from passion; 46. Kshanti, patience; 47. Mukti, freedom from greed; 48. Argava, simplicity; 49. Mardava, humility; 50. Bhavasatya, sincerity of mind; 51. Karnasatya, sincerity



of religious practice; 52. Yogasatya, sincerity of activity; 53. Monoguptata, watchfulness of the mind; 54. Vog-guptata, watchfulness of the speech; 55. Kayaguptata, watchfulness of the body; 56. Manahsamadharana, discipline of the mind; 57. Vaksamadharana, discipline of the speech; 58. Kayasamadharana, discipline of the body; 59. Gnanasampannata, possession of knowledge; 60. Darsanasampannata, possession of faith; 61. Karitrasampannata, possession of conduct; 62. Sratrendriyanigraha, subduing the ear; 63. Kakshurindriyanigraha, subduing the eye; 64. Granendriyanigraha, subduing the organ of smell; 65. Gihvendriyanigraha, subduing the tongue; 66. Sparsanendriyanigraha, subduing the organ of touch; 67. Krodhavigaya, conquering anger; 68. Manavigaya, conquering pride; 69. Mayavigaya, conquering deceit; 70. Lobhavigaya, conquering greed; 71. Premadveshamithyadarsanavigaya, conquering love, hate and wrong belief; 72. Sailesi, stability; 73. Akarmata, freedom from Karma."<sup>36</sup>

The Jaina view of salvation as given above clearly show that salvation for them, as it is for Schopenhauer, attainable here and now. The dissolution of the body is not required. In fact Schopenhauer's conception of salvation seems to resemble more the Buddhist and the Jaina conception than that of Vedanta.

Salvation for Indian thought comes as a consequence of one's duties and obligations, be they social or religious. The problem of salvation is seldom looked in isolation from the function and purpose of the entire life of man. Whatever may be one's caste or vocation, the life and actions are required to be saturated with religious and moral virtues.

Salvation is not confined to the chosen few. Perfection may be reached by man or woman, orthodox or heterodox, by the priest or by laity. A life of piety and holiness and not abstention from basic necessities of life is needed. Here, Schopenhauer's view is perfectly attuned with the Indian strain of thought. He agrees



that a balanced and religious life is what matters.

To obtain lasting and final salvation, the aspirant has to remain in the ecstasy of contemplation. Akan-khayya Sutta declares this secret: "If a Bhikku should desire, Brethern, by the complete destruction of the three bonds to become converted to be no longer liable to be born in a state of suffering, and to be assured of final salvation, let him then fulfill all righteousness, let him be devoted to that quietude of heart which springs from within, let him not drive back the ecstasy of contemplation, let him look through things, let him be much alone."<sup>37</sup> Even ecstasy of contemplation presupposes righteousness in practice.

A man who is always dominated by evil passions is certainly not on his way to perfection. In the spirit of the Bhagavadgita, a perfect man is one who has cultivated devotion or Bhakti to the supreme deity and who has surrendered his ego at the altar of truth and goodness. By one's firm faith in God, man attains liberation. This is the way of religion, and this is the common way both for a householder, and for a monk who has completely renounced the world. Knowledge may be indispensable for salvation but it can really become effective only when it is associated with devotion. "Wisdom is the supreme means of liberation, but this wisdom is not exclusive of devotion to God and desireless work. Even while alive, the sage rests in Brahman, and is released from the unrest of the world. The sage of steady wisdom lives a life of disinterested service."<sup>38</sup>

The world is not itself an abode of sin. Nor is human life necessarily sinful. Only man creates suffering and misery by his own action. Hence, the ultimate responsibility rests on man. If a man's actions are illumined with knowledge and devotion, he can then escape the privations of life and attain the final release. "May your departure from the world be as your entrance into it. As your entrance into the world is without sin, so may your departure also be without sin (Baba

Metzia).''<sup>39</sup>

## Conclusion

Schopenhauer's view of salvation culminates in religion but does not begin with it. He has learned from the East, no doubt, but has not learned enough. The Vedantic, the Buddhistic, the Jaina conception of salvation also do not complete the picture. Each view is partial. What we need is a creative synthesis of all. Mere knowledge leads us nowhere. Only Bhakti can inspire man but cannot give us the fulness of life. Karma, Jnana, and Bhakti are all moments, to use a pregnant Hegelian phrase, in the life of the spirit. They should supplement one another.

Schopenhauer's view of suffering also is unfortunately very superficial. Had he himself understood Christianity, he would have realised that suffering itself has also a value. It is not itself a punishment or evil. It may reveal new dimensions of existence. It may denote the birth pangs of a higher order. Hence, salvation cannot be identified with a release from pains and sufferings of life. Salvation should have a more positive connotation than it has in Schopenhauer's thought. Even the Buddhistic Nirvana suffers from lack of positive content. It may itself be most positive state of all but we are only left to guess what it is. Salvation should mean not simply the negation of desires and freedom from suffering and pain but the birth of a higher self, the revelation of a new order of existence. The will-to-live need not be negated but transformed and sublimated. The life here and now should be made a stepping-stone, a platform for new manifestations of life divine. Perhaps Aurobindo's thought is an attempt in this direction, a pointer to a higher order of existence, to an order of super-consciousness. Only in the realm of super-consciousness can we find true salvation and lasting peace.

# SCHOPENHAUER AND BUDDHISM

The philosophy of Schopenhauer is like a prism which shoots forth rays of different colour and hue. He is not interested in any particular dogma or philosophy, for his aim is to throw light on some basic problems which have cropped up in every age and clime. The function of philosophy is not exhausted by expounding the nature of reality; it has to guide the individual in overcoming the suffering that pervades his life, says Schopenhauer. It is the quest of Schopenhauer to develop a picture of reality which can accommodate the wisdom of centuries gained in the East as well as in the West. The philosophical theory of Schopenhauer bears the stamp of the implications which he draws from the wisdom of mankind as enshrined in its sacred religious texts and in the discoveries of the sciences of his time.

The writings of Schopenhauer bears witness to his wide reading of ancient texts and literature and of the works of his contemporaries and predecessors. Schopenhauer has the remarkable power of putting material taken from the most alien source into the texture of his philosophy in such a way that the ancient truths appear as brand new. Many a philosophical and religious legacy of widely remote places have attained new vigour in the thought of this German philosopher. Buddhism is one example of the elements assimilated into the structure of his philosophy.

Schopenhauer has no particular predilection for any school of Buddhism. He prefers on its valuable insights which are scattered in its vast literature. The texts of Buddhism available to him are well-known, and as he is a clear writer, capable of presenting his ideas

intelligibly, one can see the extent to which he has depended on the different sources. It can be said that the Buddhist texts relied on by Schopenhauer are fairly representative of the different phases of Buddhism which as a religious movement had spread beyond India in a way which could not be repeated by any other Indian religion. Buddhism had taken deep root in different countries and its vitality and resilience flourished in wondrous patterns providing solace to those who followed it.

There are many parallels between Schopenhauer's thought and Buddhism. Both are based on the widest perspective of the human problem in general. Both are secular in tone and belief. Both are for the solution of suffering which pervades the life and history of man. Both begin on a note of pessimism in the hope that it is the efficacy of right human action that can provide the talisman to end suffering. Both agree that the best way to overcome teeming desires is to put an end to wrong ideas by absorbing right beliefs.

The postulate that underlying everything in the world there is the primordial reality is acceptable both to Schopenhauer and the Buddha. There is the impersonal moral order governing the phenomena of the world, says Gautama Buddha.<sup>1</sup> Above the physical order, there is the moral order. Similarly, for Schopenhauer, the principle which is responsible for the rise of everything is the Will. There are two levels of order, according to Schopenhauer, one being the world experienced by the individual, which is temporal and consists of life, consciousness and inorganic matter, and the other consisting of the Will which is outside time. Everything is an expression of the primordial Will which is pure irrationality and blind impulse.<sup>2</sup> Schopenhauer asserts that the Will can be known by the individual as it expresses itself in him as his will. Schopenhauer does not deny the empirical world, but emphasises its phenomenal character. The phenomenal is to be understood in the background of the noumenal which is the Will. Both for the Buddha and Schopenhauer, the deeper

involvement in the affairs of the world leaves the individual in a state which is not conducive to gaining equanimity. To transcend the world of the senses is the key-note of the message of the Buddha, and this is entirely acceptable to Schopenhauer.

Whereas the Buddha is averse to any explanation of the nature of reality,<sup>3</sup> Schopenhauer is quite clear concerning it and accordingly develops an entire system round it. Schopenhauer may be said to diverge from the maxim of the Buddha that it is futile to raise questions concerning things which cannot be grasped through reasoning and intellect. The world is fluxional.<sup>4</sup> The individual is a transitory bundle of the body, sensations, perceptions, mind and consciousness. Buddhism is emphatic that impermanence and transitoriness do not absolve the individual from moral responsibilities.

The Buddha makes it clear that the individual has to make his life the medium for scaling greater heights of moral perfection. For Schopenhauer the existence of man contains the innate quality of denying the very substratum of which it is but an expression. Hence, the philosophy of the Will and also Buddhism are far from being pessimistic. To regard the world as transitory or phenomenal does not mean loss of faith in the efficacy of human effort. The moral path of the Buddha is indicative of the reality and concreteness of human existence and of the way it should be lived. Schopenhauer, in spite of his assertion that the world of the senses is phenomenal, believes in its concreteness and does not make it mind-dependent but only will-dependent. Each product of the Will is independent of and separate from the other. But what unites the individual and the world of plurality is the common substratum of the fundamental Will which continues to take innumerable forms and in its constitution always remains irrational and instinctual. Though man is just as much a product of the Will as is an animal or any inorganic matter, his importance lies in the possession of certain qualities, especially intellect, reason and the capacity to detach himself from the distractions of the world, qualities



which have accrued to him in the course of his evolutionary development. These capacities are the special gifts which are possessed by the human being and which are not available to any other creature in nature. This advantage possessed by the individual endows him with the rare power of escaping the very Will which has created him.

For Schopenhauer and Buddhism, the world is a source of much suffering and little pleasure. The individual has to touch greater heights of thought and action before he can escape the forces which block his progress towards realisation. The path of moral discipline guarantees absorption in the moral order which is in and above the world order. Being spiritual, the Buddhist moral order can engender greater hopes in the heart of man than can the omniscient and omnipotent Will which by itself cannot set an exemplary standard. Schopenhauer thinks that the notion of absorption into a reality which is full of harmony and balance is a mere absurdity. The word Nirvana fascinates him, and he accepts all that is attributed to it by the Buddhists except the view that an ultimate order which is moral would have created a world which is unlike itself. The basic postulates of Schopenhauer and Buddhism are totally different, but Schopenhauer is ready to adopt the moral teaching of the Buddha, as he finds in it the possibility of denying the will-to-live. Man's existence, says Schopenhauer, is an expression of the will, is pure will-to-live, and all those actions and thoughts which are conducive to a strengthening of the will-to-live need to be modified by following the eight-fold path of the Buddhists.

There is no attempt on the part of Schopenhauer to confound the teachings of either Buddhism or Christianity. His primary aim is to show that, unlike many religions and systems of thought, his philosophy of the Will provides a convincing explanation of the situations faced by man. Schopenhauer finds strong support for his philosophy of Will in world literature and religious texts. It is another matter that the followers of diffe-

rent religions may not find the philosophy of the Will in their religions. Schopenhauer claims that his philosophy can provide the necessary basis for deducting all the leading assertions of the Upanishads.<sup>5</sup>

Like the Buddhists, Schopenhauer has no concept of self. The self is posited because the senses meet the object and give rise to sensation, which leads to recollection and then to knowledge. No object or thing is permanent in the world, and hence, according to Buddhism, there cannot be a permanent self. The retention of the notion of the self and "I" is particularly harmful because it tends to increase desires and egotism and vitiates the progress of the individual in the right direction. Even in the absence of the notion of the self, the Buddhists maintain that the transmission of desires becomes possible, as they tend to form into a close-knit aggregate and continue from birth to birth. For the Buddha, the assumption of an imperishable self means the acceptance of its perfection and implies that the hard struggle to attain Nirvana is unnecessary. The "I" is evanescent, and no good would result from sticking to it. Schopenhauer's uncompromising view that there is only the Will and nothing else, since all things including man are its product, leaves no scope for the concept of self.<sup>6</sup> The only antecedent of man remains the blind Will, and his future lies in escaping from it. The Will in man can deny itself.<sup>7</sup> It is possible for the individual to rise above the knowledge that comes through the principle of sufficient reason. The individual should not depend on the *principium individuationis*; if he is confined to the knowledge of this principium, he keeps on deluding himself with the idea that he can delight in a life of peace and joy in the phenomenal world.<sup>8</sup>

According to the Buddha, the notion of the self has to be given up by the individual if he wants to feel affiliated with the moral order, and for Schopenhauer the individual has to overcome dependence on knowledge that is attained through the principle of sufficient reason before he can hope to understand the nature of eternal justice.<sup>9</sup> To have perfect knowledge of eternal

justice demands a rising above the limits of individuality, and this may not be possible for all men. The truth behind eternal justice is presented by the Upanishadic maxim *Tat tvam asi*.<sup>10</sup> Eternal justice not only rules the world but also remains independent of any institution that is devised by the ingenuity of man. Eternal justice is not for requital and is steadfast and sure.<sup>11</sup> This brings into focus the anxiety of Schopenhauer to justify the necessity of adopting certain maxims that were favoured by the nations of antiquity. Mere knowledge of such maxims is not enough, for they have to be put into practice. If the ancients had not found the maxims efficacious, they would not have adopted them as guiding factors in life, Schopenhauer says, and he finds that the standpoint adopted by him is amply vindicated by the maxim *Tat tvam asi*.

Schopenhauer does not believe in the theory of the transmigration of souls which is accepted by many systems of Indian philosophy; nevertheless he finds beneath this theory the idea that one who inflicts suffering on others stands in need of expiation and cannot escape this. For Schopenhauer, the theory of transmigration proves the theme that in every person there is present the same Will; to hurt others is to hurt one-self, and hence it is necessary to adopt an ethical principle which prohibits doing harm to others. Love and compassion for other fellow-beings and also for animals, as expressed in the stories of the Buddha, are admired by Schopenhauer.

While the assertion of the Will is selfish, it is the denial of the Will which according to Schopenhauer is meritorious. Egoism is assertion of the Will, and hence it has to be denied. The denial of the ego becomes actual denial and negation of the will-to-live. In the absence of any theory or belief in reality as the embodiment of all virtues and auspicious attributes, it is given to Schopenhauer to depend on the ethical elements and teaching of the leading religions of the world to define a method of vanquishing the Will, for this is the supreme force and centre of all creation in spite of its

being an irrational and blind force. Absorption into the moral order or the Absolute or the Brahman provides the ultimate bliss for some Indian saints and thinkers, but for Schopenhauer it is the denial of the will-to-live which gives peace, tranquillity and freedom from suffering. The ways of approach to the ultimate beatitude may differ, but in the matter of reliance on the ethical path, there is no difference between the ancients and a modern thinker like Schopenhauer, who makes it amply clear that the new knowledge has not lowered the value and supremacy of ancient wisdom. He asserts that every moral theory has to pass the criterion of recognising in others the identical nature which is present in ourselves before such a theory can produce genuine virtues in any individual.<sup>12</sup>

The works of love help to overcome the veil of Maya, says Schopenhauer. He states that the vanishing of the **principium individuationis** and the removal of the veil of Maya are the same. It means the recognition of one's own Will in the sufferer.<sup>13</sup> He says that all love is sympathy. The sense of oneness and the feeling of fellowship in suffering are the motives which could cause the individual to adopt the path of voluntary renunciation and to help those who are in distress.<sup>14</sup> Resignation, true dispassion and perfect will-lessness are conducive to the practice of supreme love and compassion. Here again, Schopenhauer derives inspiration from the lives of the Buddha and of the saints of Christianity.<sup>15</sup>

Schopenhauer extols the virtue of asceticism and defines it as voluntary and intentional poverty coupled with the denial and mortification of the Will.<sup>16</sup> Though Schopenhauer quotes extensively from Indian texts to show how they lay emphasis on the denial of the Will through ascetic methods, he nonetheless also finds in aesthetic contemplation an escape from the will-to-live. The contemplated object becomes an accident of the being of the contemplator; this leads to the recognition of oneself in others. The object appears as a pure Idea in aesthetic contemplation. It is a state which is

will-less.

It is clear that Schopenhauer had access to the texts of early Buddhism as well as to those of Mahayana Buddhism. The earlier phase of Buddhism with its dependence on the traditions and sayings of the Buddha appeals to the masses.<sup>17</sup> Earlier Buddhism is simple and is not interested in the formulation of any imposing dogma or metaphysics except a set of principles which could assist the individual in overcoming the sufferings of life. On the basis of the fundamentals provided by Theravada Buddhism, there developed the Mahayana School, which with its gods and goddesses possesses quite an intricate theology. It is a moot question how much of this doctrine would have been commended by the Buddha himself. Schopenhauer does not enter into the difference between the old and the new Buddhism and is interested only in certain fundamental points in the schools of Buddhism whether old or new. The condition of the individual in whom the Will denied itself is similar to that of the **Prajna Paramita**, says Schopenhauer. When wisdom is perfected, the lure of life no longer remains, and for the wise man the world is "nothing."<sup>18</sup>



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## Appendix

1. The impersonal order is indicated by the words 'Dhamma, Tao, Anangke' (necessity), 'Agathon' (Plato's "Good"). According to the assumptions of Buddhism it is fallacious to read in 'Dhamma' any prior consciousness. Human consciousness helps one to know the impersonal Dhamma. Mrs. Rhys Davids, 'Buddhism,' Williams & Norgate, London, 1925, p. 36.

2. The Will is all-supreme in Schopenhauer's system like the 'Deus' in Spinoza's system. Thomas Whittaker, 'Schopenhauer,' Constable & Co., 1920, p. 45.

3. 'Darma' is the spiritual force in and beneath everything. As it is spiritual it cannot be defined easily. Edward Conze, 'A Short History of Buddhism,' Chetana Ltd., Bombay, p. 12.

4. "Objects, brothers, are impermanent. What is impermanent, that is Ill. What is Ill, that is void of the self. What is void of the self, that is not mine... (as before)...sounds, scents, savours, things tangible are impermanent... What is impermanent, that is Ill... That is how it is to be regarded by perfect insight of what really is." 'The Book of the Kindered Sayings' (Samyutta-Nikaya), Part IV. Translated by F. L. Woodward, Oxford University Press, 1927, p. 2.

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6. It becomes difficult to believe that a single formula given by Schopenhauer could explain all the elements of existence. Miss Zimmern refers here to Schopenhauer's concept of the will. Helen Zimmern, 'Schopenhauer,' Allen & Unwin 1932, London, p. 160.

7. Schopenhauer says that he has reached the utmost limits of the will-to-live in his doctrine. The will-to-live either asserts or denies itself. Schopenhauer is not ready to cross this point reached by him in his philosophy, for he does not want to make statements which are empty. 'The World as Will and Idea,' Vol. III, p. 405.

8. *ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 455.

9. *ibid.*, pp. 456-57.

10. *ibid.*, p. 459.

11. *ibid.*, 452.

12. Schopenhauer does not take moral virtues as the final end but they are only a step or movement towards it. *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 475 and Vol. III, p. 426.

13. *ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 482.

14. For Schopenhauer the adoption of Eudaemonism can lay the foundation to a happy life. The 'Parerga and Paralipomena,' Allen & Unwin, 1951, Introduction.

15. Schopenhauer finds that Brahmanism and Buddhism are close to the spirit of Christianity. 'The World as Will and Idea,' Vol. III, p. 445.

16. *ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 493.

17. To lead the laity gradually towards moral perfection was the aim of the Buddha. No one can attain the supreme knowledge at once (Ang. 8, No. 19, 11; Majjh. No. 24 and 107). But the later Hinayana thinkers began to develop their own implications, and the Mahayana School gave many turns to the basic teaching of the Buddha. Helmuth von Glasenapp, 'Immortality and Salvation in Indian Religion,' Translated from the German by E. F. J. Payne, Sushil Gupta, Calcutta, pp. 70-71.

18. 'The World as Will and Idea,' Vol. I, p. 532. The term 'nothing' used by Schopenhauer does not convey the same meaning as the term Voidness in Mahayana Buddhism. Watambe points out how the law of transitoriness becomes in the hands of the Mahayana thinkers Voidness. The concept of Voidness equates birth, death and Nirvana and there remains no difference between the Buddhas and demons. Baiyu Watambe, 'History of Thoughts in Mahayana Buddhism' Minshukaihoubu, Tokyo, p. 63.

